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IN SPITE OF ONE of the strongest protests ever made by a Cabinet officer, a bill to grant independence to the Philippines eight years after the adoption by the islands of a constitution acceptable to the President of the United States passed the House on April 4 by a vote of 306 to 47. Secretary Stimson, in a memorandum to Senator Bingham, chairman of the Insular Affairs Committee, denounced the proposal for independence as one that would "not be to the political, economic, social, or moral advantage of the United States or to that of the people of the Philippine Islands or to that of any other country or people," and as one that "would render more difficult the safeguarding of our own interests both in the Far East and throughout the world." Disregarding this vigorous criticism, in a whirlwind debate limited to forty minutes, the House rushed the measure through. If it was unwise that many years of injustice done the islands should be righted in so peremptory a manner, it may be said that the end justified the means. Camilo Osias, Filipino delegate to Congress, took the floor and eloquently thanked the United States for all it had done for the Philippines "in this last moment that remains before you do even more for us." The House rose to its feet in cheers at his speech. It is perhaps well to let the whole matter go at that, and to hope for similar action by the Senate.

SOMEHOW Mr. Hoover's earnest plea to "every person contemplating buying a new car this year" to put in his order right away seems to epitomize his whole economic philosophy. One merely wishes, while he was at it, that he had also asked us all to buy our new ermine wraps and raccoon coats, new diamond necklaces, new yachts, and new suburban villas now—or at all events before November 8. Unfortunately, there was one slight omission in the President's suggestion. He said nothing about the means of payment for these motor-car purchases. As he is apparently out of touch with this phase of the matter, we call his attention to the fact that owners of wealth are not as rich as they were. Mr. Hoover may be thunderstruck to hear it, but the values of railroad and industrial stocks, for example, have shrunk on an average to less than one-fifth of their value two years ago. He may be amazed to learn, also, that even the workingman has been hit. The United States Bureau of Labor reports than one out of every three men working two years ago in factories is now out of work, and that the total amount of wages being paid out is now less than half of what it was then. As for the farmer—however, let us not be carping critics of what appears to be an excellent suggestion. The President has merely to correct his slight oversight, tell the people where the money is coming from to carry out his new plan for recovery, and he will find support that will surprise him.

SENATOR COUZENS IS RIGHT. When this crisis is over, if it lasts much longer, the government will find itself the owner of at least the weakest and most undesirable railroads. He pointed out that today the market value of the Missouri Pacific's securities is only $12,450,000, yet it has just received a loan of $12,800,000 of government money from the Finance Reconstruction Corporation—by way of keeping the government out of private business. Less than half of this loan, or $5,850,000, went to reimburse the J. P. Morgan group of bankers for that much of their $11,700,000 loan to this railroad. The remainder is due and payable October 1 next. Now if Mr. Hoover remains determined that no railroad shall be allowed to fail—to which proposal the bankers may be relied upon to make no opposition—then we may be sure that the Reconstruction Corporation will have to advance next October the remainder of the $11,700,000 loan to the Morgan group, which will gracefully retire leaving Uncle Sam in his now familiar role of holding the bag. When, if ever, will the Missouri Pacific be able to repay the government? Until it does the government will be the chief creditor and, if conditions get worse, will have to put up still more money to keep the railroad afloat. We are frank to say that if the government is henceforth to regu-

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late and completely control the railroads, especially railroad rates and wages, and then itself do all the railroad financing, we are for the government's taking over the roads and unifying them into one efficient system at once.

TO MYRON C. TAYLOR has fallen one of the most coveted prizes in the industrial world. He has been appointed chairman of the board of the United States Steel Corporation, directly succeeding J. P. Morgan, and stepping into the shoes worn so long by the late Elbert H. Gary. We should like to think that Mr. Taylor, who, like Gary, was a lawyer before he became an industrialist, represented in his economic thought a step or two in advance of Garyism, but the address he made only a few days before his appointment does not encourage this view. In the face of the almost unparalleled strangulation of foreign trade Mr. Taylor warned us against the slightest reduction of the Smoot-Hawley tariff, and defended that infamous measure with arguments discredited before the appearance of Adam Smith's "Wealth of Nations." His fervent pleas for tariff protection appeared in the very same speech with fervent arguments against "artificial interferences" with the grand old law of supply and demand. As if this were not enough to establish a record for inconsistency, this leader of the corporation that has followed the policy of deliberately pegging the price of steel rails regardless of changes in costs and basic market conditions also opposed efforts to fix commodity prices "artificially." And what do you suppose Mr. Taylor thinks is the cause of our present troubles? Overspeculation? Unbalanced distribution of income? Reparations? Tariffs? Lack of foresight and intelligent control on the part of our industrial leaders? No; it is all due to the shocking rise in taxes. Since the beginning of the crisis our captains of industry have hardly distinguished themselves either for the intelligence and penetration of their analysis or for their practical adaptability, but few of them have shown quite this lack of knowledge and of candor.

WHEN THE CITY AFFAIRS COMMITTEE of New York appealed to Governor Roosevelt to use his influence for the removal of Sheriff McQuade and John Theofel, two politicians whose own admissions before the Seabury Committee had proved their unworthiness to hold public office, the Governor exhibited only mild irritation against such municipal office-holders. Instead, he chose to castigate the City Affairs Committee through its president and vice-president, Dr. John Haynes Holmes and Rabbi Stephen S. Wise. Seizing upon one or two handy and perhaps unfortunate phrases in the appeal, the Governor accused the committee "straight from the shoulder" of violating "American principles of justice" in calling for removal without a hearing, and of disregarding "a fundamental of American constitutions and laws" in asking for the ousting of McQuade so long as the latter had been elected by popular vote after his malfeasance was known. When Governor Roosevelt used such arguments, which, as the City Affairs Committee has now shown beyond a doubt, were not based on the facts of the case, he only aroused a general suspicion of his motive in suddenly developing so warm a vehemence. And when he went farther and added a bitter personal attack to his previous rashness, he played into the hands of his critics. In an overwhelming rebuttal of Governor Roosevelt's histrionic charges, the City Affairs Committee goes to the heart of his Tammany record when it says: "You have shown more indignation in attacking us than you have demonstrated against all the corruption revealed in New York City in recent months."

NINE MONTHS of the reparations and war-debt holiday have been virtually wasted. Thus far nothing tangible has been done on an international scale toward lifting the world out of its slough of economic depression, though the year's respite in intergovernmental payments was obviously arranged to give the various nations time to make at least a start toward that end. Reparations negotiations have been postponed until June, in short, until within a few weeks of the expiration of the moratorium. Whether anything useful can be accomplished in that brief space of time must be questioned. Especially significant is this in view of the probability that our Congress will be found in no mood at the end of June to extend the moratorium another year. Aside from agreeing to the indefinite program for a reparations conference at Lausanne, the European Powers have done nothing except to discuss plans for a solution of the Danubian problem. A permanent adjustment of the Danubian situation would go far toward restoring stability to Europe, but it would not in itself solve the larger problem troubling Europe and the rest of the world. As June 30 draws closer we seem to be drifting away, as the National City Bank just now reminds us, from potential agreement upon the larger problem. Economic nationalism is growing, not diminishing. "Further obstacles to trade are provided in the policy of the nations in seeking an ever-increasing degree of economic isolation," the monthly review of this bank declares. "Tariffs, import quotas, licenses, and other forms of trade warfare undoubtedly are reducing not only the aggregate of world trade, but also national production and consumption, which is the measure of prosperity." Unless the leading Powers are willing to sacrifice some part of their political and national aspirations to the common good of Europe, there can be little real hope for the success of the Danubian negotiations or the restoration of Europe.

BY A VOTE of fifteen to two the Foreign Affairs Committee of the House of Representatives has voted to report favorably H. J. 282, a resolution introduced by Hamilton Fish requesting our delegation at the disarmament conference "to propose a multilateral agreement renouncing the sale or export of arms, munitions, or implements of war to any foreign nations, in accordance with the intent and purpose of the Kellogg-Briand Pact renouncing war as an instrument of national policy." The resolution explicitly provides that it "shall not be construed to interfere with the sale and shipment of foodstuffs, cotton, oil, coal, lumber, wool, leather, copper, automobiles, or other manufactured articles not commonly or commercially known as arms, munitions, or implements of war." Although Mr. Fish has scarcely shown himself to be an advocate of progressive economic ideas, in this resolution he is making a real contribution to the peace cause. For even if some of the articles excluded from the prohibitory clause can, under modern conditions, be readily converted to purposes of combat, the banning of war implements as such would make war less attractive to many a

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nation, and would put a quietus on the more nefarious activities of the armament firms. As far as it goes, the Fish resolution would serve as an admirable check to the salesmen of slaughter. The policy of banning arms shipments to warring nations has had the united support of the Interorganization Council, which serves as an informal clearing-house for almost the entire American peace movement. The great danger is that the Fish resolution will be sidetracked by the House Rules Committee, which must be made to understand its genuine importance.

THE ANNOUNCEMENT that seven Atlantic steamship lines "in despair"—so one dispatch reads—have cut Atlantic passage rates 20 to 50 per cent, despite a considerable reduction in 1931, tells the story of the grave plight of the ocean liners. Never in history has the situation been so serious; never before, we believe, has the admirable Cunard Line reported a deficit in a single year of $2,100,000. Tourist rates are to be cut 20 per cent and a round trip in this class on the superb North German Lloyd liners Europa and Bremen can henceforth be had for $169. Whereas an outside room on a first-class liner cost $400 before the war, the same type of room may be had for $228. The American who desires to go to Bremen and return in the Leviathan's tourist quarters will be able to do so for the small sum of $187. These unprecedentedly low rates ought to stimulate travel, especially as it is reported that Continental hotels are also lowering their rates. Austrians, Hungarians, and Germans as a whole cannot travel, the French always voyage little, and the Italians go by their own ships. Hence the bait of these low fares is dangled before English and Americans. It must be remembered, too, that it is not only the depression which has caused the trouble. The appearance of the many new United States passenger ships of which President Hoover is so proud, when there were plenty of foreign-flag vessels, has played its part in oversupplying the trade. As it is, in most countries between 30 and 40 per cent of the ocean tonnage, freight and passenger, is now resting at the wharves.

COLUMBIA UNIVERSITY is boiling over the expulsion of Reed Harris, editor of *Spectator*, the university daily. According to Dean Herbert E. Hawkes, Harris was refused renewal of his registration because of a series of "misrepresentations" appearing in the paper, and culminating in articles published during "the past few days." Harris, it will be remembered, was the center of a storm over the football management last fall, when he made charges of subsidizing of promising football material. His latest articles which Dean Hawkes particularly took exception to were about the Kentucky student delegation. At a mass-meeting on the library steps on April 4 thousands of students and many members of the faculty protested almost to a man the action of the Dean; among the few champions of the expulsion were members of the football squad, one of whom, perched precariously on the statue of Alma Mater, declared that Harris "shouldn't have mentioned" things about the management which "everybody knew weren't right." This young gentleman was greeted with catcalls, hoots, and apples from his college mates. A general strike, called for April 6, at which pickets will be posted at classroom doors, will attempt further to register student protest, and petitions are to be circulated among undergraduates and faculty alike. If it is true, as speakers at the mass-meeting declared, that Harris was asked to resign because he wrote radical editorials on controversial topics, then one can hope that Dean Hawkes will find he has stirred up a hornet's nest. President Butler, champion of liberal causes, could profitably turn his admirable energies toward home.

IN OUR PRESENT ISSUE we publish an article by H. Parker Willis analyzing our chaotic system of independent banks—subject to forty-nine different forms of government control, or lack of control—and making concrete proposals looking toward a safer and more integrated system. Mr. Willis's is the first of a series of articles on various phases of our economic life to be written by authorities in their respective fields. It will be followed by articles on agriculture, unemployment insurance, housing, tariffs and debts, railroads and utilities, corporation control, taxation, and mitigation of the business cycle. Much has been heard of "planning" in the last two years, but most of what has been written has suffered from two primary defects. It has either been vague and unrealistic, getting very little farther than assertions that organic planning is preferable to competitive chaos, or, when more specific and detailed, it has been written by some one individual attempting to cover the whole field, and necessarily possessing only a general sense of the special difficulties and problems in each field. *The Nation* has hoped to make the present series as helpful and concrete as possible by asking the contributors to it, in making their specific suggestions, to write chiefly with the next few years in mind.

Outlawing a Planned Economy

ON a cold day last March Judge Brandeis considered the question of ice, and uttered with Judge Stone the most important economic opinion which has come from Washington since the stock market collapsed in 1929. The State of Oklahoma in 1925 declared that the sale and distribution of ice is a public business and that no one shall manufacture, sell, or distribute it without securing a license. Under this statute a commission was forbidden to issue a license except on proof of public necessity, and was authorized to deny an application where existing facilities were sufficient to meet the public needs. When the New State Ice Company sought to enjoin one Liebmann from engaging in the ice business without first obtaining a permit of public necessity, the justices of the Supreme Court were called upon to determine whether in their opinion the elected representatives sitting as the legislature of the sovereign State of Oklahoma had improperly designated the ice business as a public utility. Judge Sutherland declared for all the jurists save Brandeis and Stone that ice was not a paramount industry and that the prosperity of the entire State did not depend on it. This prevailing opinion ventures the suggestion that ice is as private a business as milk or meat or shoes. In the reprint of this opinion which we first read, Judge

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Sutherland was quoted as saying that the ice business was not "infected" with a public interest. Page Dr. Freud! The printer who unintentionally misspelled "invested" was unconsciously interpreting the impulses of the majority opinion.

The Sutherland opinion is forthright. Private profit, otherwise termed private business, impinges on a public nerve only if the physical health of the community is affected or if a monopoly is threatened. If private business avoids these two dangers it must be allowed to continue without interference by the people of the land. The distress of plenty, the waste of overproduction, the public disaster resulting from uncontrolled competition mean less to these judges than a cold in the head or $300 an ounce for platinum.

Judge Brandeis at the start seizes on the right of a State to provide licensing apparatus in order to prevent waste. A single courageous State may serve as an experimental laboratory. He points to the analogies of railroads, street cars, motor vehicles, and cotton gins. A city may sell ice, wood, gasoline at retail. It may build warehouses, elevators, packing houses, flour mills. Where and when a private business should be converted into a public one is primarily a matter for each State to determine. If such determination is not capricious or unreasonable, federal courts should not interfere. A State may even adopt foolish remedies, because foolishness is comparative and the federal courts do not possess a monopoly in that product. He piles up the facts thick and fast—data concerning population, temperature, amount of refrigeration, development of dairy business, recent origin of ice business, cost of ice to families with children, refrigeration for marketing purposes, increasing use in consumption, and wastes of uncontrolled overproduction or faulty distribution. Judge Brandeis in effect makes a mighty field-survey of the relation of frozen water to the happiness of people. The evils indicated a situation needing a cure, and the cure desired by the State of Oklahoma was obviously not so fantastic as to force the federal court to override the wishes of the people. In the end he indicates his own judgment that the elimination of waste in the production and distribution of ice might be properly hoped for through the mechanics devised by the State of Oklahoma.

The fight is on. Forces will be aligned behind Sutherland and behind Brandeis. Those who believe in a planned economy will oppose the mandatory anarchy of the majority opinion. Therefore let us hope that the next time a name is sent in to the United States Senate for appointment to the federal bench the Judiciary Committee will confront the nominee with the Sutherland and Brandeis opinions. Let us stop this nonsense of thinking that juristic behavior is a thing apart from personal prejudice. The Senate should reject any candidate who opposes the Brandeis opinion. Moreover, may we not expect that those who commented favorably on the Swope plan will reject the Sutherland philosophy of uncontrollable abundance?

An amendment to the federal Constitution is not on the cards. However, as rugged individualism drives us nearer to economic ruin and revolution, we predict that a similar case will arise, but instead of having to do with the means of keeping milk cool for babies it will concern milk itself. In some such distinction the Sutherlands may find a means of changing their position without the disgrace of admitting error.

The "Clerks" and War

IN a recent issue of the Parisian review *Europe,* M. Jean Guehenno addresses an open letter to that distinguished but none too effectual body which is known as the Permanent Committee on Intellectual Cooperation of the League of Nations. He assumes that its orators mean what they say in their eloquent speeches concerning the function of the intellectuals in promoting the harmony of the world, and he assumes still further that they are as disappointed as the rest of us to discover that they can think of no projects likely to be more generally useful than M. Bela Bartok's request for an international library of phonograph records, or Mr. John Masefield's proposal to endow a traveling company of declaiming poets. To assist them, he tells an anecdote so pointed and makes a suggestion so concrete that we are determined to pass both of them on to our readers in the hope that other learned bodies may also profit.

It seems that when Ernest Renan began to advance in years he was struck by the fear that senility might lead him to retract the propositions which he had always defended. He might even, he realized, be converted by some too skilful priest and leave behind him one of those deathbed retractions of which the church is so proud. And so he took a wise precaution. He set down in black and white an advance retraction of any retraction he might subsequently make, and he requested that the future should consider as his true thoughts those which he had uttered while still possessing the full force and the full liberty of his spirit.

But, says M. Guehenno, these cooperating intellectuals have even more reason than Renan to fear a self-betrayal. However boldly intellectuals may speak now, however international-minded they may be, there is every reason to assume that should any crisis arise they would recant as their equals recanted before, and that all the beautiful internationalism of M. Valéry and Mr. Masefield would be forgotten in the ardent patriotism of each. Pacific sentiments flourish only when they are not of the slightest use, and there is always time between the "strained relations" and the "declaration of war" to discover abundant excuse for bellicose pronouncements all the more effective for the very reason that they come from persons notoriously pacifistic before. But if the members of the League's committee are sincere, let them follow Renan. Let them sign now a statement expressing their present opinions, and let them issue a warning in advance against any concessions which either hysteria or social pressure may later cause them to make. Meanwhile, admirably enough, M. Guehenno, their spokesman, says:

> Do you not know, gentlemen, that without you, without us, war is not possible? All our speeches, all our articles, all our songs are necessary before the poor bread-eaters of the world can be led to the trenches and the grave. Only we can lie well enough to make their death seem beautiful. Fifteen years ago we were engaged in this strange task. We became disgusted enough to swear never to participate in it again. It was a politician who said, "As long as I am here, there will be no war." Have you the same courage? Dare you to say that, no matter how long the war lasts, you will not be there?

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Taxes with a Vengeance

WITH extraordinary haste, as if driven by genuine fear, the House of Representatives has passed a tax bill estimated to produce $1,032,400,000. Granted, for the sake of argument, that there was a national emergency, the bill is on the whole as satisfactory a one as could be drawn. The excise taxes voted on automobiles and cosmetics and other luxuries are in line with the recommendations made in these columns, and the bill should certainly satisfy those who have asked high income levies upon the rich and large inheritance taxes. If federal and State taxes together are, in the lower brackets, not so high as those in England, where a man with an income of $2,000 pays $106.25 annually, they approach and pass the English surtaxes when the net income goes over $2,000,000 a year. If there is any American left with an income of $5,000,000 he will hereafter have to turn over $3,472,600 of it to the State or the federal government. A less fortunate man with an income of $200,000 would pay $141,612 in England, as against $110,350 under our new tax bill, including State taxes with the federal. Surely these drastic levies will prevent the heaping up of great wealth, especially when coupled with the gift and inheritance taxes. As the bill now stands, a $10,000,000 estate will pay $3,116,000 to the government; if the gift taxes are much lower, they are a beginning.

That these levies will actually produce the amount the House of Representatives has reckoned on is hardly to be believed unless there should be a sudden and marked improvement in business conditions. That they will inevitably further demoralize the employment situation and gravely affect many benevolent and philanthropic enterprises, as well as clubs, yachts, athletic associations, and so on, is part of the inevitable price that must be paid for such a radical and advisable social readjustment. It must not, however, be believed that the revenue bill as now drawn is likely to go through the Senate and then pass the ordeal of a conference between both houses without being considerably altered. This is the time when the industries especially affected, like the automotive, will bring all their batteries to bear upon the Senate Finance Committee, which is to grant hearings for the short period of two weeks. That there will be a determined effort to secure the adoption of a limited general sales tax at a low rate is clearly indicated. So great is the pressure likely to be that there are those who believe that the budget will not be passed prior to the Congressional recess or adjournment for the political conventions. It will be a battle of selfish interests against each other; but it cannot be denied that it was just this desire on the part of each group affected to "soak" the other fellow that had a great deal to do with shaping the bill prior to its passage by the House. The unfounded fear of a real catastrophe in the business world was too great to permit of leisurely and scientific framing of the bill.

None the less, as we have said, the result is not bad, however heavily it may bear down upon individuals and individual industries. It does not exhaust all the means of taxation, but it will, if passed in substantially the present form, bring home to larger numbers of citizens than heretofore what it costs to run a government which has recently participated in a World War, and finds itself sunk in an unprecedentedly deep slough of despond. We must again, however, point out as earnestly as we can that the bill should be reinforced by drastic cuts in the coming appropriation bills, not one of which has as yet been passed by either House. As we go to press it is stated that Mr. Hoover contemplates sending a message to Congress asking it to eliminate some $300,000,000 from the budget which he himself, and his Cabinet officials, have forwarded to the Congress. This is right and just, and as we have repeatedly urged, we hope that Congress will lay ruthless hands upon the enormous and totally unwarranted $750,000,000 annual bill for the army and navy, despite the fact that the President last week stated that the defense expenses must not be further reduced. If, as the Treasury says, the House of Representatives bill will not balance the budget by $250,000,000, the best way to get that money is by savings and not by further taxes. Mr. Hoover has properly recommended a great saving by the ending of the Shipping Board and a transfer of all merchant marine questions to a single body. This should be voted by Congress at once, and it should further lose no time in cooperating with the President to bring about the general overhauling and reorganization of the independent bureaus, some seventy or more, for which he has again and again appealed, and which has been proposed since the beginning of the Harding Administration.

But even this will be of no help if Congress continues to appropriate large sums of money for unnecessary purposes. We refer specifically to the increasing demand that the remainder of the soldiers' bonus, aggregating $2,240,000,000, be paid at once. It now looks as if this measure would be passed with lightning speed by both houses, and perhaps be passed over the President's veto—on this question Mr. Hoover's record has been excellent. The granting of this sum of money would inevitably disarrange not only the budget balancing, but the whole plan of the Treasury for long- and short-term borrowing. We cannot see an argument in its favor at this time. Nor can we see why the President should be demanding $150,000,000 at this juncture for his Home Loan banks when his request is in such sharp contradiction to his demand that nothing new be undertaken. The House did well to vote down the $100,000,000 asked for farm-drainage relief—another raid in the form of a revolving fund, this time intended to help the Western farmer. Still another measure now being urged upon Congress, which has far more merit, is the proposal for a bond issue of $500,000,000 to enable the government to complete certain waterway projects within a five-year period. Meanwhile the tax battle is half finished. But the fact remains that there is not today the slightest sign of a genuine beginning of economic recovery. Balancing the budget, or even planning to do so, undoubtedly helps to restore confidence, but until drastic reconstruction measures are undertaken, such as the lowering of tariffs and the settling of the question of debts and reparations, we very much fear there will be no turning the tide.

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Presidential Possibilities

VII. Newton D. Baker—Just Another Politician*

By OSWALD GARRISON VILLARD

JUST another politician and orator without fixed principles, veering to the winds if the necessity arises or there is an opportunity to take office or make money—this is Newton D. Baker. If anybody wishes another and smaller Wilson in the White House, with another great gift of oratory, though usually inferior to that of the late President, let him work for Newton Baker. Mr. Baker's is, indeed, the type of mind and character which is to be found in so many of the recent leading statesmen of the world who have now successfully brought it to the verge of complete disaster. He started out as an idealist of the finest type; he can clothe his ideals in beautiful language and touching generalities, such as "The world needs . . . faith in the moral order of civilization, faith in the common people." Then he can and will forsake them whenever expediency counsels. More than that, like Lloyd George, Ramsay MacDonald, Woodrow Wilson, and Theodore Roosevelt, he has the ability to persuade himself at any moment that the position he assumes at any given time is not only exactly the right one for him to take, even though it may be at the opposite pole from the position which he originally held, but that his taking it is quite consistent with his earlier beliefs and public position. I am sure, for example, that Ramsay MacDonald is convinced that his present place as head of a government of Conservatives, whom he has fought and denounced all his life, is logical, in accord with his earlier beliefs, and a natural and entirely correct crowning of his whole radical career. I am sure, too, that he feels that he saved not only England, when he formed the so-called National Ministry, but other nations as well; and, if he is running true to the type I am trying to describe, he will have very radical doubts as to the honesty of the motives of most of those who disagree with him.

Newton Baker has the same power to rationalize anything and everything that he does. These men are plainly not consciously dishonest or deliberately unstable. They are genuinely sincere in their emotion of the moment, which is so often at variance with their previous emotions. They visualize at once so many arguments for their new positions that they are sure they are right, and to fortify themselves they call to their aid the qualities of the paid advocate, who can identify himself with the case he is presenting or the client he is defending in court. Any and all opposition only strengthens them in their belief that reason and principle are on their side. Such minds, when coupled with grace and charm and the persuasive power of true eloquence, easily carry the multitude with them. Their penchant at first is for the rights of man, the battle for the under-dog, the protest against intolerable wrongs inflicted upon the masses by those who are specially privileged. Then, when victory is theirs and they are securely installed in office, they begin to slip. Some of the divine-right idea creeps in until—if they rule long enough—they are convinced that beyond all others *they* are fitted to govern; that there is no one qualified to criticize them intelligently, or to succeed to their place. Sooner or later they feel that there is a good deal to be said for working with the privileged. Thus it was that Woodrow Wilson ended his Presidential career at precisely the opposite position to that from which he entered political life; that Ramsay MacDonald, who first achieved eminence as head of the extreme left-wing, unyielding pacifist branch of the Labor Party, has now repudiated the conservative Laborites, jumped over the Liberals, and ensconced himself in the ministerial chair belonging to the greatest Conservative majority in English history, the Tories, the diehards, the imperialists who know nothing and learn nothing of the world's true needs.

To those who like this sort of President, Newton Baker is, as I have said, to be highly recommended. Many of my friends and some of my fellow-journalists plainly do. They have never believed with me in the policy of no compromise where principle is concerned. They often think that compromise is a virtue; they do not see that it steadily puts back or limits all progress. Many of them greatly admired Wilson and some still do. They will work for Newton Baker and, if he is elected, they will be so delighted with him that they will excuse his every twisting and turning and give sound and solid reasons why he has to sell ambassadorships or high appointments, or has to do things that he knows are wrong, as did Woodrow Wilson. Do we not live in a practical world? Would you have a man forever stay outside of the political breastworks? Does not the world progress by give and take and by little steps forward, one at a time?

Plainly there are clashes of philosophy here, and each side will stick to its own. To me, however, the Newton Baker type of political mind is the most dangerous there is. For one of the worst of modern criminals is the man who raises great hopes and idealistic expectations in the hearts of masses of his fellow-men and then lets them down to bitter disillusionment, to cynicism, to welter in blackness. Or the man who encourages a nation to intrust its fate to him on the basis of fourteen points and then compromises those fourteen points away until there is practically nothing left, with no sense of his betrayal of the trust of those who placed their future in his hands. I really prefer a conscienceless political pirate like Matthew Quay, or Boies Penrose, or Reed Smoot. You know where they stand. You know what their reactions will be when any decent, forward-looking measure is presented to them, when anything liberal drifts into their ken. You know just where they are to be found and how they are to be attacked. But when it comes to a Newton D. Baker you do not know where you will find him from one month to another. Think of the gallant young Newton

* An article on Franklin D. Roosevelt, by Henry F. Pringle, will appear next week.—EDITOR THE NATION.

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who enlisted whole-souledly under the banner of Tom L. Johnson winding up as the paid attorney for the Van Sweringen brothers, the big-business owners of the city of Cleveland, and helping them to spoil Tom Johnson's vision of a marvelous water-front development by placing the Union Station in the Public Square—right opposite Tom's monument—and not where Johnson had designed that it should go! Think of this man fighting the Van Sweringen battles before the Interstate Commerce Commission, against the spirit and against the opposition of some of his oldest friends and associates of the Tom Johnson days!

If you can tell a man by the associates he keeps, you can also tell him by the associates he has lost. Why is it that the best I have been able to get out of old allies of Newton Baker in his Johnson days in Cleveland is, "Well, Newton is able to rationalize anything that he does." Oh, yes, I know that a lawyer has got to live and to support his family and that the Van Sweringens have done a lot of good things in Cleveland as well as some bad; that Van Sweringens, too, are entitled to their day in court and a lawyer to defend them or to advocate their schemes, just as any wrongdoer is entitled to counsel. All these arguments of compromise or palliation are known to me; I have heard them endless times in thirty-five years of journalism, used equally earnestly on behalf of the worst type of political scoundrel and the Newton Baker type of reformer gone wrong. Thank fortune, there *are* men who will *not* take service when such service means a complete break with their past beliefs and principles; who *will* find another means of support even though it does not mean one of the finest houses in town and fees running into the hundreds of thousands of dollars every year—Mr. Baker's office probably does the largest corporation business of any in Cleveland, representing, for example, the great Youngstown Sheet and Tube Company. He is also the lawyer for the Scripps-Howard newspapers, which, having disgraced their liberalism by supporting Hoover four years ago, are now burning their fingers again by backing their paid attorney for the Presidency, and so enabling their critics to recall that it was Newton D. Baker who, rightly or wrongly, exempted Robert Paine Scripps from the operations of the draft law after he had been selected by a draft board. Perhaps I can best illustrate the change in point of view which has come over Mr. Baker by giving here a hitherto unpublished extract from the stenographic record of remarks by him at a recent hearing before a special master appointed to fix the fees of the lawyers in the Youngstown case:

> MR. BAKER: Perhaps I had better dispose of Judge Jenkins, and say all I am going to say about him in this law suit, and say it now. It is a very grave misfortune that this case was tried before Judge Jenkins. In the first place, he was a local judge, and not unsusceptible to local feeling. He had had almost no experience with affairs. He was lifted suddenly from a perfectly respectable occupation as a mill worker to a judgeship in the Court of Common Pleas. Being of a speculative and perhaps discontented frame of mind, he had looked up at his fellow-men from his anvil with envy and suspicion; and when he came to be a judge of the Court of Common Pleas, he looked down on them from his elevation with contempt, and it was part of the misfortune of this judge that he had not had contact with men of affairs, and was unaccustomed to the way large undertakings of this kind are necessarily managed. . . .

According to this philosophy no judge must sit in a case involving large corporations unless he has had contacts with the captains of industry and been familiar with the processes of big business.

On June 28, 1924, Mr. Baker made this speech:

> There is no subject on earth, apart from my relations to my God and to my family, which compares remotely with me with the League of Nations. . . . The acceptance of a strange and perverse fate called upon me, who loved the life of the youth, called upon me to come into your houses and ask you to give me your sons that I might send them . . . into deadly places. And I watched them and shivered and shrank with fearful fear . . . and I swore an obligation to the dead that . . . I intended to lift up my voice always and ever until their sacrifices were really perfected. I have one other debt. . . . I served Woodrow Wilson for five years. He is standing at the throne of a God whose approval he won and has received. As he looks down from there I say to him: "I did my best. I am doing it now. You are still the captain of my soul."

I sat three rows from Newton Baker and straight in front of him when he uttered those words at the Democratic Convention of 1924. Only twice in my long service as a reporter have I seen men weep in a public meeting in response to spoken words and this was one of them. I have quoted these words here at some length because they are such a perfect epitome of Newton Baker. Note the eloquence, the exquisite use of words. Note the damnable lie that he came into men's homes "to *ask* you to give me your sons," when he actually came with bayonets, with the Provost-Marshal General, with handcuffs jingling in his hands, standing behind Baker not to ask, but to *take* without mercy; the records are full of men who went to prison because they refused to be drafted to kill. Note his resemblance here to Woodrow Wilson who, with equal falsity, named it the "selective draft" and declared that "it was *not* a conscription of the unwilling" even as hundreds of men were being sent to the hellish tortures of Leavenworth and other prisons. Note Baker's statement that Woodrow Wilson is "captain" of his soul; his assertion that he intended to lift up his voice *"always and ever* until their sacrifices were really perfected"—all of this in the course of a plea that the United States enter the League of Nations *at once*. Then read this from the same lips less than eight years later (January 25, 1932):

> I would not take the United States into the League, if *I had the power to do so,* until there is an informed and convinced majority sentiment in favor of that action by the United States. I do not think that the Democrats should advocate our entrance into the League just because Woodrow Wilson favored it.

The man at the throne of God is no longer captain of his soul!

Newton Baker knows perfectly well that if the successful champions of reform in our history had waited for "an informed and convinced majority sentiment" before acting, there would have been few if any reforms achieved. How were the slaves freed? How was prohibition enacted—for better, for worse? How was woman suffrage accomplished? By demanding a constitutional amendment *at once* and then waiting for "an informed and convinced majority" to appear? Of course not. Mr. Baker, I venture to say, would still be publicly for immediate acceptance of the League were not

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the White House in sight. And there you have the man: eloquent, facile, mouthing beautiful ideals, swearing eternal fealty to an institution and to a dead man (who, by some to us unknown wireless, he knows is at the right hand of God), and then throwing them both overboard until such time as other voices and other pens than his have convinced a majority of his fellow-citizens that the League of Nations is a good thing!

I have already been taken to task for saying that Newton Baker's statement of January 25, 1932, as to the League, quoted above, was a change of face. One fellow-journalist for whom I have great affection insists that it was not a change; that Baker has not favored our going into the League since that time when he got his private message from God in 1924. As an offset to that we have Henry F. Pringle's statement in the *Outlook and Independent* for January 13, 1932, that "as recently as September, 1931, Baker wrote in a private letter that *'the Democratic platform of 1932 must reflect a more helpful and cooperative international attitude.'*" A private letter, yes. But publicly? I will wager that very little will be heard of this subject from Mr. Baker from now on. And why, if I was wrong in thinking that the 1932 statement was a *volte-face,* did the press of the country, from one end to the other, so accept it, and the press associations send out dispatches that Baker's hat was now in the Presidential ring? Why, if I was wrong, did Heywood Broun say that this statement of Baker's proved that he "would rather be candidate than candid," and add: "It is the custom for Presidential candidates to avoid all contentious issues and compete in platitudes"?

So with his attitude toward war and peace. Mr. Baker's character is certainly far better than A. Mitchell Palmer's. But when Mr. Palmer was asked by Mr. Wilson to become Secretary of War he promptly refused because he felt that it would be inconsistent with his being a Quaker. Mr. Baker, pacifist that he was, jumped at the chance. Frederick Palmer has just written two volumes to prove that Mr. Baker was a model Secretary of War, chiefly because he placed himself in the hands of the generals, forgetting that the civilian Cabinet head was expressly created in order that a civil authority should hold the military men in check. His first act was to ask a general what should be done as to Villa, who had just raided Columbus, New Mexico. The general urged that the pursuit of Villa on Mexican soil be continued and the forces increased. "So be it," said Baker without stopping to consider, or to ask the President, or the Secretary of State, or the Cabinet whether we should invade the territory of a friendly Power in force. Here and there he did overrule the military; in the main he was their man, their proud and happy scholar, eager to do what he was told. It was not the ideal regime which Mr. Palmer would have us believe; Mr. Baker may well say, "Save us from our friends," as he reads these volumes! There were those contracts, for example, "O.K.'ed" by the Secretary, which compelled us to deliver millions and millions of dollars' worth of goods in France *after* hostilities had ceased, later to be sold to the French for a comparative pittance. But above all we have the picture of this erstwhile pacifist proclaiming the draft, deceiving the people as to its true character by making a great "patriotic" event out of it, and doing violence to his earlier creed of freedom of conscience and liberty of belief.

We see him joining in the war-time hysteria, doing his bit to rouse passions of hate and bitterness and rage by the usual falsifications and abuse of the enemy—for them to this day he has expressed no regret, made no apology, though surely so keen a mind knows beyond question what history now teaches about the *facts* of the war as well as the utter failure of every American objective in the struggle save the removal of the seat of a base militarism from Berlin to Paris. He knows that the world was not made safe for democracy; nor war forever ended; nor the rights of small nations safeguarded; nor freedom of the seas assured; while his own ex-beloved League of Nations stands not only deserted by him but exposed as a pitiful pretense, a thing of impotence and jeering, as it looks at Shanghai and moves weeks too late to save the slaughter. What might he not have us believe, to what would he not lend himself, if this time he himself entered the White House? Neither his record nor his character gives us any assurance.

So it is, wherever you probe—the turning and twisting inseparable from this type of mind. There is the municipal electric light and power plant in Cleveland. The paramount issue in Baker's campaign for the Mayoralty in 1911 was the question of issuing $2,000,000 of bonds for the purpose of building this plant. The Chamber of Commerce opposed and arranged a debate between Baker and the president of the Cleveland Electric Illuminating Company in the assembly room of the Chamber of Commerce. Baker opened it with one of his magnificent phrases: "I am in the House of Have, but I am pleading for the House of Want." Two years later he resigned his membership in the House of Have because that House was opposing a bill to permit the cities of Ohio to enter into competition with privately owned utilities. Said Baker to the House: "I must remain free to advocate things which seem to me necessary for the best interests of the people of Cleveland and I cannot while a member of the chamber criticize resolutions which have been adopted . . . as I think I would be justified in doing were I not a member of your organization" (letter of February 5, 1914). On the same day he sent a longer letter to Munson Havens, secretary of the chamber, in which he gave more fundamental reasons for resigning, because "a subcommittee of that body can meet behind closed doors and consider matters of grave public policy without the fact that such a subject is pending before them being known to the members of the chamber and an opportunity to be heard being given to such members," and then act on the policies thus secretly determined. On March 6, 1914, he opened the way for his return by writing: "Were I not Mayor I think the situation would be entirely otherwise so far as my affiliation with the chamber is concerned." But when he returned to the chamber in 1916, when he became a director of it in 1921, and when he was elected president in 1922, the star-chamber proceedings against which he protested had not been changed in any way or any action taken to mollify Mr. Baker's outraged democracy. To this day committees decide on the policies in private without the members having a chance to be heard or publicly take their position.

Furthermore, when Newton Baker became president of the House of Have it was engaged in the popular "big-business" fight of smashing the unions. The House of Have published page advertisements in the newspapers demanding the open shop in Cleveland, and those advertisements were

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signed by that great liberal, Newton D. Baker. He was not, however, through with the electric-light plant that he had sponsored. In 1924 a director of public utilities, appointed under the city-manager plan, who was a sworn enemy of the municipal plant, urged that the city buy its current from the private companies and that the plant be shut down. To further his plans this director got out a report attacking the plant. Who wrote the foreword to this pamphlet? Why, the plant's own former sponsor, Newton D. Baker. Here is one paragraph which gives a true picture of the general drift of that foreword:

> Municipal enterprises of this sort have some advantages and some disadvantages in the matter of financing. They do not have to pay taxes but are required to set up the equivalent and this equivalent can be invested in plant. On the other hand, they cannot bond the plant facilities as private enterprises do for extensions and betterments. They are thus able to make extensions out of net earnings and such general city bonds as the council or the people find it possible to authorize but they cannot make revolutionary changes in the art by thoroughgoing reconstructions based upon bonds secured by the value of the plant itself.

Mr. Baker was either mistaken as a lawyer when he at this time and subsequently opposed as illegal the mortgage-bond issue to rehabilitate the electric-light plant, or was deliberately playing politics when he wrote that mortgage bonds were not permitted by the Ohio law. It is a simple fact that subsequently the light-plant-expansion issue became a hot political question and both Republicans and Democrats joined in 1931 in putting a $2,500,000 general bond issue on the November ballot in order to provide for rehabilitating the plant. Did Newton Baker, who wrote that foreword to the pamphlet designed to finish the municipal plant, oppose the issue of the general bonds for the purpose of making it more effective in competition with the private plant? He did not. Ostensibly, at least, he swung around again and supported that bond issue in a weak statement. But the party of which he is the boss made little organized effort to carry the bonds. Under Baker's leadership the party deserted the municipal light plant, for the founding of which Mr. Baker's liberal admirers give him so much credit.

There is much division of opinion in Cleveland in explanation of these and other shifts. One man who has for years studied his course says: "I do not feel toward Baker as many here do. They think he sold out; I am of the opinion that he never believed in those things he claimed he believed, he merely *thought* he believed them while Tom Johnson was alive." I rather think this is in keeping with the type of mind I have tried to describe. But there is another keen observer who writes me: "Baker is simply a true liberal gone wrong. Many here feel that he is just as sincere in his new role of conservative as he was in his Johnson days. I, however, think he was sincere when he was a follower of Johnson and that he is now conscious of the present conflict between the impulses of his moral nature and his reasoned behavior. One cannot study his public utterances during the last ten years without being satisfied that he is always aware of the anomalies and inconsistencies of his career, and that his rationalizing of today is deliberate. Under the spell of a powerful personality like Tom L. Johnson or Woodrow Wilson he will 'emote' to white heat and will act in all sincerity. In the seclusion of his office he will cool to frigidity, plot to outwit the other fellow in the contest for place and distinction."

The best characterization of Baker yet made is that given to Heywood Broun by a Cleveland woman who knows Baker well. "Newton," she remarked, "is a functioner. Put him at the head of a peace conference and he'll do you a swell job. Make him Secretary of War and he'll swing your conflict for you as well as any man. It doesn't matter where you drop him—Newton will always function." Yes, in the Chamber of Commerce or against it; with the League of Nations crowd or without them. But as to standing *fast?* Oh, no, not Mr. Baker. Knights-errant may do that sort of thing but not the erstwhile Tom Johnsonite, now the real boss of the Cleveland Democratic machine and the chief Cleveland attorney of the great corporations.

Was Baker a great executive? Not when he was Mayor, when he could not delegate power and was swamped by his correspondence and limitless details. Elected by a majority of over 18,000, he was reelected by 3,500—the defections being chiefly from his own Democratic camp—one reason assigned being that they resented Baker's cultivating the friendship of men who had been Tom Johnson's bitterest enemies. As Secretary of War his industry was limitless. His days were incredibly long, his ability to stay sixteen and seventeen hours at his desk, day in and day out, nothing less than marvelous. Then he had to—and did—delegate authority; then he had to—and did—make quick decisions. There he correctly backed Pershing to the limit, giving him complete support. His industry is always phenomenal; his mind, as already said, craves information of every kind and gets it. He reads amazingly much, especially when it is remembered in how many cases he appears and the extraordinary thoroughness with which he prepares himself for his court appearances. He rarely commits a speech to writing before delivery; his phrases are spontaneous.

He is kindly, pleasant to meet, modest, and personally unassuming. He has, moreover, in great abundance what some Frenchman has declared to be "the most beautiful thing in the world—patience." Quite unlike Mr. Hoover, Baker is the philosopher a public man should be when it comes to public criticism. He neither makes a hair-shirt of it, nor has he ever been known to explode with anger. Throughout the war he put up with some of the bitterest and most unjust cartooning and libeling and never struck back. This was one of the finest things about him—that he was too busy as Secretary of War to indulge in controversies—there are only one or two justified exceptions to this rule. He was willing to trust to time for its verdict. His own life is beyond criticism. He exemplifies all the familiar Christian virtues. Indeed, he is so particular as to his associations that when, after promising to preside at the reading of a well-known poetess for the benefit of a college endowment, he discovered that her way of life was not his, he promptly drew the skirts of his rectitude about him and sent word that he could not possibly preside for a woman of her lack of standards!

Today he declares he has always "wanted to fight for idealism and liberalism . . . whether carrying a banner or marching in the ranks." But what kind of liberalism and idealism and on what days of the year, the even or odd? The Woodrow Wilson kind? Heaven forbid any such fresh visitation upon our unhappy country! The Woodrow Wilson

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kind has now avenged itself upon us so thoroughly that we do not today feel sure our economic system is going to survive the war to end war, or the debts and reparations, or that abomination called the Treaty of Versailles, which Mr. Wilson so cheerfully signed and approved. I have elsewhere (*The Nation,* January 27, 1931) stated my belief that Newton Baker has in him the makings of a splendid fascist President. Should we drift further upon the economic rocks, if he were in the White House I believe that he would as readily place himself in the hands of Wall Street's financiers—whose failure is now admitted before all the world—as has Herbert Hoover and as did Wilson when war came. Should it be necessary to shoot down hungry Americans, Newton Baker, I think, would do it without turning a hair, and then do a beautiful speech about it with sobs in his voice and a clear message from God in it.

> I weep for you, the Walrus said,
> And deeply sympathize.

Moreover, he would rationalize his every act and prove, with incredible skill, acumen, eloquence, and knowledge, on the day that he tore the Constitution to shreds, that this was exactly in the spirit of the Founders, in line with the best decisions of the Supreme Court, and in the best traditions of the Daughters of the American Revolution.

As it happens, the times do not call for this type of man. The emergency is great, the need for a forthright man tremendous—a man with the backbone of a Grover Cleveland, whose speeches were not eloquent but went to the point; whose sentences were interminable, but meant a lot when you had finished them. We have been lured on for years by the silly platitudes of Harding; the incessant, contradictory, meaningless stuff talked by the really verbose Coolidge; and the pitiful twistings and usually entirely false emptiness of Herbert Hoover. The situation has got beyond the talking stage—beyond sob-stuff eloquence. I do not know a thing about Speaker Garner and I have never read one of his speeches, but I think I should vote for him before I would for Newton Baker. Garner, at least, does not seem to know who is standing at the throne of God.

"Limiting" Drug Manufacture

By ELLEN LA MOTTE

THE manufacture of drugs is so far in excess of medical needs that a hundred tons of such drugs as heroin, morphine, and the like have leaked into illicit channels during the past five years. From the international conference to limit the manufacture of dangerous drugs, held at Geneva last June, little emerged but a treaty so cumbersome and intricate that few can make head or tail of it. Some have pronounced it an improvement over existing treaties. No international agreement, however, can achieve anything if there is bad faith in the nations signing it. Fifty-six countries met at this conference, among them those whose factories feed the illicit trade—Great Britain, France, Holland, Germany, Switzerland, and Japan. Three of these—Great Britain, France, and Holland—do a big business in drugs in their colonies, selling opium to their Oriental subjects. Naturally, when governments frankly engage in this traffic, they rather wink at their own nationals doing the same thing in a private, less flagrant way. Once admit the principle that it is all right to make money from trade in habit-forming drugs and it hardly matters whether this is carried on through a licensed government shop or through an illicit dealer. Profits and damage are equally great. Moreover, the private individuals engaged in the traffic are frequently important and influential and able to exercise great pull "at home."

The story of the Geneva conference is revealing. From the outset it met heavy going. This huge drug manufacture was not to be disturbed, and the delegates from the manufacturing countries were there to see to it. The chief spokesman was the British delegate, Sir Malcolm Delevingne. His original intention had been to push through the "quota plan," under which each manufacturing country—except the United States—was to be allotted a quota, thus forming a cartel in restraint of trade. The inherent difficulty with this plan was that each manufacturing country wished to make the entire 100 per cent—no less. For three weeks the conference wrangled and fought over this quota plan, finding it impossible to divide the amount among the hungry manufacturers.

The American delegation was a silent witness to these interminable wranglings; we had nothing to suggest as an alternative, having arrived seemingly with but one idea—not to oppose the British. Finally it was the French and Japanese who proposed an alternative scheme, the United States meekly coming in and saying we would support it. At this point our delegation seemed to wake up and to offer some useful suggestions, sticking in little improvements which we were prepared to hold out for, even if it meant encountering British hostility. We encountered it all right, but thanks to the steadfastness of our second, third, and fourth delegates—H. J. Anslinger, Dr. Walter Treadway, and State Senator Young of California—we managed to stand pat. Our chief delegate, J. K. Caldwell, and two of his technical advisers seemed mainly intent on standing well with the British.

The one thing we stood out for was to have codeine "covered," that is, surrounded by the same restrictions and safeguards as morphine. At present codeine is transported as freely as salt, with no certificates required for export or import, no record of its comings and goings. It is a raw material from which more potent drugs can be made, and for years the drug ring has used it in carrying on its hidden trade. Indeed, there is some question of whether codeine is made at all—whether codeine labels are not simply stuck on bottles containing more dangerous drugs. At the first proposal to "cover" codeine the drug ring rose as a man. When this happens, a vital spot has been touched. The fight on this issue raged for days. Thanks to the tenacity of the American delegation, supported by a remarkable speech from Signor Cavazzoni, it was finally won. Even so, there are certain loopholes: the manufacture need only

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be reported once a year, instead of every three months as with morphine; its retail sales are unrestricted; preparations containing less than 2 per cent are sent off without certificates; and as contraband it need not be destroyed.

Another fight came over heroin, and again the drug ring, led by Delevingne as spokesman, presented a united, unyielding front. Heroin is the chief drug of addiction, and a committee of experts brought in a report saying that its social dangers far outweighed its medicinal value. In medicine, substitutes are available. The question before the conference was whether to abolish manufacture, as has been done in the United States. The Swiss put up an impassioned appeal, asking what would become of the thousands of consumptives in Swiss sanitariums if they were deprived of this vital drug. This plea would have carried more weight if in the next breath the Swiss spokesman had not admitted that the medical needs of these thousands amounted to only four pounds a year. The Egyptian delegate said heroin was smuggled into Egypt by the ton; he was in favor of any radical measures the conference might adopt. The upshot was an agreement to continue manufacture, but to export the drug only upon special certificates issued by governments, the importing government itself to receive the drug without the agency of any middleman. This special supervision for heroin is an advance.

The third battle was over seizures—should contraband be destroyed? What, exclaimed Delevingne, destroy these valuable drugs, worth millions of pounds or dollars? Never! In support rose the Japanese, Swiss, Dutch, Germans, French—*Never!* This fight went on for days, in committee and in plenary meetings. One began to realize what these seizures mean—the easy transportation of drugs from country to country without hampering restrictions—a gentlemen's agreement, by which one country tips another off, and "seizures" are made at prearranged points. In the Far East this interchange is doubtless highly organized and efficient. For example: a couple of tons are seized at Hong Kong and brought to England. Four tons made in French factories in Turkey are seized at Marseilles. As the various delegates pleaded not to destroy seizures, one realized their immense importance, and began to understand something of the inner workings of the drug ring.

Twice it was decided that seizures should be destroyed —once in committee, and again in plenary session, at the first reading of the new convention. By a thin margin, nineteen to sixteen, the vote was in favor of destruction. It was interesting to see the British rally their cohorts—to see Egypt, where, admittedly, heroin was smuggled in by the ton, suddenly vote against destruction. But we lost this fight over contraband. Lost it through lack of support by the American delegation. The British introduced a resolution that seizures should be destroyed on condition that Turkey and Jugoslavia would promise not to manufacture drugs. At this critical moment, when everything depended on our stand, our delegate hesitated: "The American delegation is in favor of destroying contraband, for the sudden accession of a ton or half a ton of drugs is a danger . . . but . . . but . . . I will support the British proposal . . ." At that moment we lost the fight. Seeing America back down, the countries which had previously supported us were thrown into confusion and dismay. Delevingne then withdrew his proposal, and the vote was hastily taken upon another, by which "Drugs in Group I" (which excludes codeine) might either be destroyed, converted (into codeine), or used for medical purposes. This was carried twenty-three to eight. A few days later we heard what was back of this surrender. It was frankly admitted that a bargain had been struck by the drug ring to cover codeine in exchange for the non-destruction of contraband. A shameful bargain, and no feather in the cap of the League of Nations.

Incidentally, this is rather hard on the decent and honest manufacturer — this competition with illicit drugs. He arranges his purchase of raw material, calculating on the known medicinal needs of his country, and suddenly, overnight, finds his plans disrupted. A seizure of two tons of morphine may leave him with an equal amount on his hands, unsold. He is penalized for the sake of the illicit trade.

The ostensible object of the conference was to limit the manufacture of drugs. Whether this has been accomplished depends on what you mean by "limiting." The Empire State Building is also limited—to a main part, a tower, a mooring mast, and the possibility of a few Zeppelins attached thereto. By the new treaty manufacture is "limited" to what each country thinks it can get away with—to the "estimates" each one may make. These include:

1. Estimates for domestic needs. Estimates for conversion (into codeine). Plus 25 per cent extra—just in case.

2. Estimates for export. Plus 50 per cent extra—just in case.

3. To make all safe, manufacture may exceed these combined estimates by a 5 per cent increase, to make sure there is no shortage.

4. Stocks on hand, when the treaty goes into effect—if it ever does. These are government stocks—quantities unknown. One country is said to have enough heroin on hand to supply the world for 150 years.

5. Besides which, these government stocks may be increased by purchase, manufacture, imports, and seizures. This augmentation may be reported each year, but not the amount on hand, nor what becomes of it.

There are certain checks and balances. An excess in one year is to be deducted from manufacture next year. Quarterly statistics are to be submitted to the Permanent Central Board, which in turn submits them to a supervisory body which meets once a year. This consists of four people —a member of the Permanent Central Board, of the Opium Advisory Committee, of the Bureau of Hygiene in Paris, and of the Health Committee of the League of Nations. This body has no authority, save to examine the figures submitted. If any estimates appear too high, an explanation may be demanded from the country in question. If this is satisfactory, no more is heard of the matter. Statistics may be published —at discretion. Briefly summarized, such are the accomplishments of the conference. The convention was finished and ready for signatures on July 13, 1931; twenty-nine signatures were attached. It comes into force when twenty-five countries ratify, including four of these eight—France, Great Britain, Japan, Holland, Switzerland, Turkey, and the United States. There is a vast difference between signing and ratifying; there may be years of delay before there are sufficient ratifications—years during which the factories will work day and night, piling up drugs to be hidden in secret places ready for shipment into illicit channels.

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Balanced and Unbalanced

Congress, Press, and Parties Face the Budget

By PAUL Y. ANDERSON

Washington, April 2

NOW that the fumigated tax bill is safely in the Senate's hands and the House has purged itself of the twenty-year-old stigma of being a mere Presidential rubber stamp, some recent history should be edifying. No piece of legislation since the World War has evoked so much sophistry, misrepresentation, and downright lying. The Treasury, in its frantic efforts to bolster the argument for a general sales tax (previously condemned by Secretary Mills and Undersecretary Ballantine), published estimates of the probable yield from the new taxes on wealth which often were so low as to be grotesque. Party leaders opposing those levies resorted constantly to the transparent trick of applying the maximum rates on income and inheritance to entire incomes and inheritances, although the very page boys in the cloakrooms knew that the maximum on income applied only to the net portion above $5,000,000 and that the maximum on inheritances applied only to the net portion above $10,000,000. House leaders and Treasury officials tore their hair and reiterated the exploded warning that high taxes would cause wealth to take refuge in tax-exempt securities. Supposing that the people who own the country's business should decide to sell out and invest their fortunes in tax-exempt securities, I should like to have someone explain just whom they would sell to. Would they turn the banks, factories, mines, and utilities over to the unemployed in the hope eventually of getting their money and putting it into tax-exempt securities, or would purchasers appear magically from Mars? Moreover, since virtually no new tax-exempt securities are being issued and those outstanding could be purchased only when the present owners consented to sell, what would become of the wealth released by such sales? The answer, of course, is that all such arguments were utterly dishonest and those making them are either wilful prevaricators or they are too ignorant to be trusted with control of government finances.

* * * * *

AT the same time I am constrained to admit that the most flagrant instances of misrepresentation occurring in connection with the tax battle in the House were perpetrated by members of my beloved profession. A brief review of events will make this evident. The formally constituted party leaders reported a bill to remove the Treasury deficit by raising about $1,100,000,000 in new revenue, of which about $600,000,000 was to come from a general tax on the consumers of manufactured products. Naturally it aroused profound opposition. Such influential members as La Guardia of New York, Swing of California, and Doughton of North Carolina condemned a consumers' tax as repugnant to American policy and tradition, and insisted the needed revenue could be obtained by other means, including taxes on wealth. As the fight progressed the opposition grew. By substantial majorities the House increased the normal tax on incomes above $8,000 a year, increased the surtaxes on large incomes to a level approaching war-time rates, made moderate increases in the taxes on gifts and inheritances, and finally rejected the consumers' tax. Throughout this proceeding most of the metropolitan newspapers denounced the majority as "a disorganized mob," although the only hysteria discernible from the press gallery was that of the "leaders," who suddenly finding themselves without followers burst into piercing shrieks about "communism," "national ruin," and similar nonsense. La Guardia, Swing, and Doughton repeatedly emphasized their desire to balance the budget—and told how they would do it. Over and over they pointed out that the only issue was whether the burden was to fall on wealth or the buyers of the necessaries of life. But editors and correspondents simply assumed—at least in print—that a consumers' tax was the last hope of lifting the Treasury deficit, an assumption flatly contradicted by the earlier statements of Mellon and Mills and subsequently demonstrated to be egregiously false. This propaganda proving ineffective, the party bosses finally surrendered to the opposition and faced the necessity of finding new sources of revenue—which they promptly did by espousing the opposition substitute with hardly a change! It was evident by now that Speaker Garner's Presidential balloon was coming down even faster than it had gone up, and he acted to halt its descent. In a carefully staged speech which needed only organ music to complete the camp-meeting atmosphere he told the House he had never favored a sales tax and didn't care what taxes the House adopted so long as they were sufficient to balance the budget. It was an exciting show but devoid of significance except as it affected Garner's personal and political prestige. Thereupon the chastened leaders, assisted by the triumphant majority, began systematically enacting the La Guardia program.

* * * * *

YET for days during that process the front pages of the metropolitan press blossomed with strange stories of the "collapse of the revolt." I do not here allude to the Hearst papers. The purpose of the Sage of San Simeon was obvious; indeed, he acknowledged it publicly. He aimed to sabotage the income tax, which chisels so deeply into his own fat purse, and to undermine the traditional American principle of taxing citizens in proportion to their ability to pay. That purpose was not very patriotic, or even respectable, but he pursued it without concealment and his antics were highly diverting—let us hope he does not burst an artery. I allude to such papers as the New York *Times*, which made the astonishing discovery that the House had "reversed its course"; to the Washington *Star*, which mentioned the "chastened mood" of the House and portrayed the prodigal donkey returning to Garner's barnyard; to the Baltimore *Sun*, in which my friend Frank Kent disclosed that the House was "ashamed of itself" and "wanted to get right again with

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the country"; to the berserk tirades of the Chicago *Tribune*, the New York *Daily News*, and the Washington *Post*, and to that editorial fishwife who accused La Guardia of having "an alien mind." Ponder that one—"an alien mind"—because he opposed a type of taxation which has never been accepted by this government and which its sponsors repeatedly described in debate as being of foreign origin! The simple truth is that a majority of the House adhered to the same course from start to finish, except for a momentary aberration when a log-rolling trade resulted in the imposition of tariffs on oil, gasoline, coal, and coke. When that folly threatened to become contagious, who rushed to the rescue of the leaders and successfully entreated the members not to wreck the bill by encumbering it with tariff duties? None other than Mr. La Guardia (retired Major, United States Army Air Service), of the "alien mind." Two "reversals" did occur: the party bosses reversed themselves to follow the rank and file; and most of the newspapers* reversed the facts of the situation. The fate of the tax bill in the Senate is not altogether certain; much will depend on how many Democrats listen to the seductive whispers of Barney Baruch and John Raskob. My best guess is that the tax on inheritances will be further increased and that the tariff duties will come out; the Senate can hardly afford to be shamed by the House. As for Garner—well, John, it was a good race until you came to the first hurdle!

* * * * *

THE forecast of early scandal in the operation of the Reconstruction Finance Corporation was soon fulfilled. We learn, to put the matter in a nutshell, that this happened: The Missouri Pacific Railroad owed $11,700,000 to three New York banking houses—J. P. Morgan and Company, Kuhn, Loeb and Company, and the Guaranty Trust Company—of which half, or $5,850,000, was due April 1. It applied to the R. F. C. for a loan of $12,800,000, to be used partly in paying off the bankers' loan. Eugene Meyer, Governor of the Federal Reserve Board and a director of the R. F. C., objected to a loan for that purpose, insisting it was the duty of the bankers to carry the railroad in this crisis, especially in view of the money they already had made out of it. But General Charles G. Dawes, the savory functionary who long ago in the Lorimer case proved his willingness to help out a banker friend with other people's money, insisted that the loan be granted and took his case to President Hoover. Evidently the President supported him, because the corporation approved the loan without waiting for the approval of the Interstate Commerce Commission. Under what Senator Couzens described as "all kinds of pressure" the commission then "yielded its views" and approved the loan "with some reluctance." It was the first instance in which the corporation had approved a loan to a railroad without first receiving the commission's assent. Commissioner Eastman made the following pertinent comment:

> No good reason has been shown for approving a government loan to enable the applicant to make a 50 per cent payment on the bank loans maturing April 1. I would have no difficulty in joining in such approval if there were any evidence that the loan is needed in the public interest. But no one has made or attempted to make such a showing. . . . Morgan and Company, Kuhn, Loeb and Company, and the Guaranty Trust Company would not, so long as interest on these bank loans is paid, force a receivership by refusing an extension. The repercussions would be much too dangerous in other quarters where the private interests of these financial institutions are involved.

In other words, the loan was as much an accommodation to the banks as it was to the railroad. Incidentally, the Missouri Pacific is controlled by the Van Sweringen crowd, one of whom is Joe Nutt, national treasurer of the Republican Party and charged in that capacity with the arduous duty of raising a campaign fund to reelect President Hoover. Isn't it about time to ascertain whether the government's life is in the hands of the bankers or whether the bankers' lives are in the hands of the government? During debate over the creation of the R. F. C., Congress and the rest of us were told it was imperative for the government to go immediately to the rescue of the banks, and that $500,000,000 must be appropriated at once. Yet within a month Secretary Mills announced that the bankers had warned the government to balance the budget on pain of having its credit ruined. Who is boss around here, anyway?

* * * * *

THE Senate is going through the novel experience of being "put on the spot" by influences seeking the confirmation of Federal Judge Wilkerson, of Chicago, whose elevation to the Circuit Court of Appeals has been proposed by President Hoover. The methods employed are in the most approved Chicago manner. The Judiciary Committee is told that the real opposition to his Honor comes from the henchmen of Al Capone whom the judge—after some rather curious maneuvers—sentenced to prison. Confronted with the fact that the opposition really comes from labor organizations, the proponents reply that the Illinois unions are controlled by Capone! To the national railway brotherhoods with their vast membership this information was somewhat surprising, and even the Judiciary Committee received it with some incredulity. In fact, Frank Loesch, chairman of the Chicago Crime Commission, and Isham Randolph, head of Chicago's "Secret Six" (whatever that is), have been confronted with an embarrassing request to produce evidence in support of their charge. Thus far the only result has been a telegram from a notorious Chicago organization of strike-breakers stating that Loesch and Randolph are right. Nevertheless, it probably will be easier to produce such evidence than to explain Judge Wilkerson's and Harry Daugherty's injunction against the striking railway shopmen, or the still more remarkable injunction restraining members of the Chicago Musicians' Union from quitting work without the consent of their employers. Like numerous other newspapermen throughout the country, the writer is interested in observing that the Chicago *Tribune* is most vociferous in asserting that opposition to Wilkerson's confirmation originated among gangsters. The newspaper that employed "Jake" Lingle should know what is happening in gangland, but the little matter of the injunctions remains to be explained. Perhaps Bob Lee, who is reported to dominate *Tribune* policy and to whom Lingle reported daily, could explain the whole situation to the Senate Judiciary Committee.

* There were the usual honorable exceptions, conspicuous among which were the Scripps-Howard papers and Old Reliable out in St. Louis. Probably there were others; I apologize for not having seen them.—P. Y. A.

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What Shall We Do with Our Banks?*

By H. PARKER WILLIS

TO the man who is willing to read financial history "with his eyes and not with his prejudices," it is increasingly evident that the banking question in the United States has reached a turning of the road. For a good while past, the pathway has dipped steadily downward. Our banking system has grown less manageable and less efficient, less solvent, less reliable either as a keeper of money or as a user of it. Our Federal Reserve banks have shown less and less leadership, and have grown more and more dependent upon the wishes and inclinations, expressed or implied, of small cliques drawn from the financial interests of the larger cities. The result has been an individualism exaggerated at times into something approaching chaos. It is foolish to speak of this result as "inevitable" or "irresistible." No other country—not even Austria—has had any such experience as ours, though many have suffered from false financial policies of every sort. We, with the greatest gold stock in the world's history, and with the most wealth and almost the lowest per capita debt, have suffered most from failures, incompetence, inability to regulate either our domestic or our international relationships in banking and money.

The forward path in our banking development now forks sharply. One branch leads further downward to complete disorganization. The other climbs steeply to a level of greater wholesomeness and safety. It will not be easy to pursue this latter. Yet we must follow the more difficult road unless we are willing to let our whole economic order be further disorganized and disturbed. Professor Marshall has said that money and banking are the nucleus around which all economic science clusters. He would also say, we may be sure, that practical, sound management of money and banking is the nucleus around which all successful economic policy intended for the betterment of the community, or even for its protection in present well-being, must cluster, and on which it directly depends. What, then, are the elements of a sound and safe banking development for the welfare of the United States in the early coming years? What must we seek to do during the next four or five years as a practical task?

It has already been seen and admitted by forward-looking men that the first and great commandment of banking soundness in this country will be the ending of the century-long conflict on banking oversight between the States and the central government. Some one self-consistent policy must control; and it requires no sage to see that this policy will be most easily attained through the transfer of power over banking legislation to the federal government. Lacking such a formal transfer, there must be found some means of agreement between the State legislatures and the federal authority whereby there will be uniformity of action and oversight, and whereby all banks will be affiliated with our federal system on terms helpful to them. Without this step we shall go on with the conflict between grades of government, with the attempt on the part of the States to tempt banks away from their federal charters, with the effort of national administrators to draw them back by laxity in law or in administration, with the craven fear on the part of the Federal Reserve System lest it lose members through uprightness of administration, and with other elements of profound weakness that must ultimately bring even more complete disorganization than that now existing. We might attain the desired unity by a constitutional amendment that would vest all power over banking in the federal government —this then to be followed by complete revision of present banking enactments—or we might get a similar outcome through some movement headed by a wise and strong President in some future Administration that would bring about identity of organization and identity of action on a code of uniform banking legislation.

To hope and work for some such result is certainly not utopian nor even unpractical, yet it is clear that by hitching our banking-reform wagon to such a star we shall accomplish our ends but slowly. It is hard, in the first place, to educate those who are but moderately interested in banking to the point where they are willing to see the need of any such procedure. It is still more difficult to induce public men to commit themselves to actual steps in behalf of any such far-off divine event. The desired result may be attained, but it probably will be only after much more sad experience and bank misery, unless there shall come some sudden and unexpected illumination of the problem that will convince even the wayfaring man, though a fool, that a major operation would be the shortest way to the relief of what is one of the chief underlying difficulties of contemporary American economic civilization. Moreover, suppose it were possible to get the desired constitutional amendment tomorrow, what should be done under it—what changes should we make?

We shall not be too opportunistic, therefore, if, while awaiting some working out along this indicated line—and it may be added, some change of feeling in Congress that would permit wise legislation after such a constitutional change as that indicated had been effected—we formulate to ourselves some more immediately resultful program as a basis of practical procedure. Suppose, then, we assume, as so many insist upon assuming, that we shall always have to struggle with a condition in which there is a dual control of banking, with forty-nine competing jurisdictions seeking to "attract" banks to their "systems" by laxity in law or administration.

If, accordingly, we determine to work along this narrow line, it seems necessary, first of all, to bring about a direct and positive supervision and regulation of banking that will relieve the community from the terrible suffering and danger that has been, and is daily, inflicted upon it by banking mismanagement and failure. Within the past year we have had some 2,300 closings of banks, and we have enlisted in an army of discontent, it is estimated, approximately 6,000,000 persons who were depositors in the banks closed since the beginning of the panic and who are now deprived of the use of their funds. It seems obvious that the adoption of

*The first of a series of articles embodying a practical program for America by outstanding experts in various fields. The other articles will appear in successive issues.—EDITOR THE NATION.

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means to correct this crying evil must be resorted to. Frank thought, free of the evasions of selfish economic metaphysics, brings us inevitably to one of two conclusions: (1) since the unprofessional depositor has not the means to judge accurately the soundness of his bank, and since wholesale bank failure is disastrous to both economic and social order, some means of stopping bank failures must be found in governmental provisions that will either guarantee depositors against loss or at least provide them with immediate means of getting the worth of their claims as soon as a bank is closed; (2) there must be such a reorganization of the banking system as to insure—humanly speaking—that failures shall be rare episodes.

There is good reason for rejecting the notion of "bank-deposit guaranty." Not only is it repugnant to those who believe in the soundness and effectiveness of individual choice of banks as possibly the best means of indirectly keeping them in order (despite the lack of criteria of judgment already mentioned), but the experience with the plan that has now been quite extensively had among the States has shown it to be, generally speaking, unsuccessful. The federal government might do better with such a guaranty or it might not. In any case, the presumption is against the project. In lieu of such a resort to extremes, we have the alternative of establishing a banking regime not subject to failures or of applying severe and stringent legislative regulation to the business of banking, of such a nature that there will be an entirely different type of management. What the general nature of this regulation should be we shall presently suggest. The other proposal—that of so reorganizing our banking as to produce a system that is failure-proof—is in some ways more attractive. It has been found entirely possible in such countries as Canada and Great Britain largely to eliminate bank failures, and to lay upon the banks as a body the duty of absorbing those of their number which are on the verge of failure, so as to save the community from suffering. To do that in the United States is nearly out of the question, for the reason that it would imply the very great centralization of our banking system. There are today far too many banks in this country for strength or safety, and they are, in a vast majority of cases, much too weak, with over-small capital and scanty resources. They are not large enough to resist the strain of depression in many cases, even if they have been fairly well managed in times of industrial and economic peace. It seems, however, almost certain that the people of the United States will not self-consciously endure the risk, as they conceive it, of great centralization in banking, even if assured that thereby they may escape a considerable share of the dangers of failure. Branch banking is a way of bringing about concentration and should be tried as fast as the public will permit. This drives us back to the application of satisfactory regulation as the most immediate measure of reform, even though a good deal can and should be done by making access to the banking profession far more difficult for incompetents and exploiters than now.

Given, however, a specified banking structure, the tendency to failure already spoken of is in part the outgrowth and in part the accompaniment or effect of a national vice—the disposition to speculate. Bankers of all classes have found it easier to "make money"—as they thought—by dabbling in the securities markets than by following the slow, painful course of financing business and discounting commercial paper. They have of late years (1) invested too heavily in stock-exchange securities, and (2) over-heavily financed those who were speculating beyond their means in these same issues—and in others. Inasmuch as we have as yet no means of controlling or limiting or regulating the issue of securities, and inasmuch as over-issue will, under existing conditions, probably always continue as a perennial evil of stock-market finance, it is clear that the banks which hold the public's money must in some wise be divorced from stock-market operations. To accomplish such a result apparently means that they must be separated into two groups—one which does not accept deposits but is allowed to finance industry, and a second which accepts deposits and carries on commercial banking but does not engage in market operations or in financing those who do. Moreover, since a study of failures shows that the primary causes of such failures are found, directly or indirectly, in the market operations of banks, we are led once more to the conclusion that the immediate or expedient way of starting the reform of banking for the purpose of prompt relief is through the control of the technique of actual bank operation of which we have spoken above, and a discussion of which was then promised.

What ought this type of control to be? There need be no hesitation in answering such a question. First of all, there is more and more ground for feeling that banking is too hazardous a profession to be left open to any ignoramus or favorite son—or son-in-law—who knows nothing about it. The "Wisconsin idea" of licensing bankers has been ridiculed but has much to commend it. If we license plumbers, engineers, public accountants, lawyers, and doctors, why should we not throw around the banking profession some safeguards of personnel. There is ample reason for so doing.

With qualified men at the head, there is still a need for meticulous regulation of our deposit banks. They ought not to be allowed to apply the depositors' money in any way that will bring it into unreasonable hazard. There is every reason, therefore, for careful specification and regulation of the types and classes of securities they may buy. The desirable thing will be, as soon as practical, to make our deposit banks entirely free, so long as they carry a type of deposit that permits any such purchases, of the business of receiving and caring for savings, and to let them serve only the demand-deposit needs of the community. In such a case, the field of their investments will be narrow, for they will then be bound to deal almost wholly in commercial paper. To make their efforts safer even in that restricted field we should generalize or universalize our false-statement laws and require by law what is now the custom among American banks—the interchange of credit information. We should compel the filing of truthful statements by applicants for loans and in every way we should endeavor to protect banking operations.

It may take a good while to separate deposit banking from investment banking, demand deposits from savings, but there should at least be no serious trouble in introducing departmentalized banking somewhat after the California plan. If, however, even this involves too much social effort, and if we insist on permitting banks to continue to receive savings or time deposits along with demand, pending the more complete change of general policy already indicated, their purchases of securities must follow the already well-developed requirements of savings-bank operations, and the savings or time de-

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positor should be given a first lien on the assets which represent his funds, that he may have all possible safety in case of failure.

It seems hardly needful to add that in such a situation as is thus described the banker should in no circumstances be permitted to engage in any "back-door" or "back-stairs" banking. He should not, in other words, be suffered to have an interest in an affiliated concern which may do all those things that are forbidden to him, and to which he freely lends the funds for the carrying on of all those activities in which he himself is technically not permitted to engage. "Affiliates" must be separated from their "parent" banks and discouraged entirely, whenever and wherever possible, under our dual State and federal jurisdiction. The least that can be done for the moment is to end the system of joint ownership or control and to insist that an affiliate shall borrow from a bank only on the same terms and to the same extent as others. It is deeply regrettable that banking opinion has not already thus discouraged them, or made them impossible. Perhaps it may yet do so, as is suggested by some recent cases in which affiliated concerns have been given up, especially in New York City. But while waiting for such a growth of opinion, the law ought not to hesitate. Stock-market operations, underwriting of securities, dabbling in all kinds of undesirable or dangerous schemes must be abandoned by our bankers, whether they act in the bank itself or in some related enterprise.

Above all else, there is needed much more careful protection of the present trust-company operations, in such a way as to insure the safeguarding of the funds of deceased persons or of persons with trust funds to their credit who require the service of a trustee. Present conditions are exceedingly unfavorable to such persons. It is true, as asserted in much of the trust-company advertising of the present day, that a trust company never dies or disappears as may an individual executor or trustee. It may, however, be added that the individual never merges or changes his whole type of being. The trust company does, and it has often happened of late years that a man placed his property in trust and sailed away or retired serene in the confidence that his property was in the hands of conservative men, only to find within a short time the company sold out and combined with another where the men in charge were of a different type and where funds were used for totally new purposes. The practice of making securities in one affiliate of an enterprise and buying them for trust account—directly or indirectly—in another is too common, and must be ended.

We have already noted that, with the changes that have been above suggested, the business of dealing in securities ought to be relegated to another group of institutions. This suggests the desirability of an entirely new type of banking house whose mission it should be to finance long-term obligations, carry on foreign-trade finance, issue securities for purchase by investors willing to take some risks, and generally to finance and serve the capital market. For this purpose adequate, moderate federal legislation is desirable. It should be uniform for the whole country, and should aim chiefly (1) to protect the investor from false representations; (2) to prevent the deposit bank from becoming involved in securities operations; and (3) to prohibit unfair company regulations, control by small cliques through unfair voting arrangements, and the like. It is evident that all companies doing an interstate trade should be required to keep their books on a uniform prescribed plan, somewhat as do the railroads, and to make full and complete statements to stockholders. Financing in open market should be contingent upon compliance with reasonable requirements of this sort.

Nothing has thus far been said herein of the question of our Federal Reserve banks and their management. The subject has of late been widely and technically discussed. This is no place for the continuation of a purely technical analysis of that important phase of our banking problem. Those who want to pursue the inquiry thoroughly and with evidence for each step toward a conclusion will find in Part VI of the Hearings before the Senate Banking and Currency Subcommittee of 1931-32 the full statement of the current policy of Federal Reserve banks as set forth in their own words. Suffice it to say, for the purposes of this article, that some reserve banks have wandered far from their original purpose, and have become primarily stock-market auxiliaries, discounting but sparingly for their city and larger member institutions, and scarcely at all for country institutions, while the latter get less and less benefit from the system. Their main activities, particularly in the larger cities, and conspicuously in New York City, are those of helping the stock market by letting out funds or adjusting rates, as opportunity seems to require or permit.

This is a situation that gravely impairs the efficiency of our banking system and threatens its solidity and safety for the future. It is also at odds with the conception of a restored soundness on the part of the smaller institutions which, as already explained, are likely to continue as an outstanding feature of the American banking scene for a good while. Probably the fundamental error was made originally when reserve banks were permitted to abstain from dealing with the public, and when they were forbidden the supervision of private stockholders. Their shares ought unquestionably to be thrown open to private subscription, and they should at the same time be compelled to engage in direct dealings with the public. Thereby the business men and the smaller bankers would be encouraged to offer them the right kind of paper, and thus to attract their funds directly into business, instead of putting them through the stock-market strainer and perhaps spoiling that strainer in the process. In default of some such far-reaching reform as this—which, after all, would merely introduce here something like the system that has lasted more than a century and a quarter in France and far longer in Great Britain, with success—it should at least be possible to revise the system in such a way as to insure a commercial-banking preference on the part of the reserve banks, a degree of independence on the part of the smaller and more remote members, and a better and more professional management on behalf of all.

If we now retrace our steps and sum up the chief points in the program thus set forth we shall see that it shapes up somewhat as follows (although here presented in an order somewhat different from that employed in the preceding discussion):

1. Revise the Federal Reserve Act so as to insure more direct dealings with the commercial banks; and if possible with the actual borrowers of the country.

   (a) Let this be done by restricting the channels of market operation, and broadening those of commercial operation.

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(b) Let it be accompanied by a reorganization of personnel such as to insure greater ability in charge of the reserve banks and better professional quality in the personnel of all banks.

2. As soon as feasible, secure a constitutional amendment that will permit Congressional legislation on banking for the whole country. When this is attained, compel all banks to join the Federal Reserve System, in one capacity or another.

3. Pending the attainment of such an amendment, lose no time in developing a system of adequate investment-banking regulation that will apply to our commercial banks, members of the Reserve System, the same kind and quality, at least, of restriction in their investment-banking activities that has already been applied to their commercial-paper operations.

4. The chief feature of this regulation should be action designed to render it difficult or impossible for them to continue in the development of stock-market affiliations and operations, and to oblige them to confine their activities to commercial-paper transactions practically exclusively.

5. Non-deposit banking with permission to issue and underwrite securities, to sell and deal in bonds and other evidences of long-term debt should then be encouraged as an independent type of organization under federal uniform supervision. Corporate bookkeeping on a uniform basis and truthful public statements of condition should be an essential.

6. "Affiliates" or allied enterprises should by no means be permitted to continue to operate in connection with their "parent" commercial banks.

7. Appropriate improvement of bank examination and supervision, State and national, with additional administrative safeguards, should be at once and thoroughly applied, the object being to prevent bank failures of the wholesale sort from which the community now suffers.

8. Incidentally, let there be provided a suitable organization for purchasing and liquidating bank assets without subjecting the public to the losses and inconveniences inherent in present methods.

This program is moderate. It calls only for the minimum measures of reorganization demanded by existing conditions. Every one of the changes provided is required in the interest of restoration of prosperity. There is nothing extreme, nothing "radical" in any of the notions thus expressed. They are all in line with sound and conservative banking principle—all indorsed at one time or another by most cautious men. They ought to be absolutely demanded and put into effect as the result of the coming Presidential campaign. The only thing new or striking about them would be their incorporation as a general program—interrelated and calculated to be effective.

We have left until the last the problem of the monetary policy of the United States. It is a large problem and one on which it will be well to avoid dogmatism. Nevertheless, a few major points are certain. We must continue on the gold standard until an unquestionably superior and effective plan shall have made its appearance. If, meanwhile, there should prove to be a possibility of restoring the gold standard throughout the Western world, we should join actively in making it workable. This need not in any way prejudice our deciding to give up the gold standard in the future should we hit upon an admittedly superior substitute. It would merely remedy intolerable conditions pending a general decision to change policy. If, while awaiting the time for the development of such a substitute, the recession of prices and the suffering thereby caused becomes intolerable, let us remedy it by breaking down excessive prices which are the result of combination and agreement—or failing in that, let us get a change of price level if it *must be* (which the present writer does not admit) by changing the gold content of our unit of value rather than by inflating our banking system and tinkering with prices behind the scenes, to the great profits of special groups.

All this may be properly deferred until we have accomplished the duty nearest to our hand—the reorganization of our banking system in the interests of safety, fairness, and equitable treatment of the depositor, investor, and saver. It would not help these groups to have a "managed currency" or any other substitute for our present standard of value if our banking should remain, as now, disorganized, unsafe, and selfish.

Swans and Statesmen at Geneva

By M. FARMER MURPHY

Geneva, March 9

EVERY visitor to Geneva has at some time or other during his stay leaned over the railing of the quais or bridges and watched the swans floating on the blue waters of the lake. As the birds drifted along without apparent effort, he has admired the grace of their movements and the serene dignity of their bearing. Then, while engaged in these reflections on the majesty of the noble bird, he has been startled to see the long curved neck suddenly straighten and the head shoot down to the muck on the floor of the lake, while the tail feathers pointed directly to the zenith. In this upside-down perpendicular position the swan would remain for some minutes. Naturalists probably have an explanation for this eccentricity of the Lac Léman swans, but it would certainly be superficial and technical. Naturalists would doubtless say the swan saw something to eat on the bottom and dived for it. The real explanation, however, is not so commonplace. Geneva swans have associated so much with international statesmen that they have taken on some of the most striking characteristics of those gentlemen. The swans look impressive as long as things are going smoothly, but when, unknown to the observer, they are abruptly confronted with some bird problem and the necessity of making a decision, they meet the emergency by assuming a perpendicular position with head in the mud. Amateur ornithologists report that since the meeting of the Assembly of the League of Nations to deal with Japan's war upon China the practice of this acrobatic stunt has increased among the swans, as if they were responding to some potent but invisible influence.

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The behavior of the so-called "great Powers" in the Assembly meetings leads to the conclusion that the general intellectual and economic bankruptcy which has so long been evident throughout the world is to be topped off with a manifestation of complete moral bankruptcy. In the face of a crisis as grave in its implications as the beginnings of the World War, one involving the whole structure of international order and good faith—a situation which would naturally cause men with any convictions whatever to utter burning words—the sessions were opened by Paul-Boncour with a lengthy and florid discourse of reminiscence and attempted justification of the futile efforts of the Council. Even when the Assembly met for real business as a committee of the whole, it sat dumb till roused to a semblance of life by Chairman Hymans. The body at the outset was inert and listless before as clear a case of right and wrong as ever came to a tribunal for decision. By acts which admit of no dispute Japan had flagrantly violated three treaties—the League Covenant, the Nine-Power Treaty, and the Briand-Kellogg Pact—to which it had solemnly subscribed. Not only that, but its military had in quick succession broken various pledges given by its government regarding the extension of operations. Not once in dealing with the League Council had Japan met squarely the fundamental question involved, but had evaded it and replied with quibbling excuses and even insolent equivocation. The challenge to the honor and authority of the League was direct and uncompromising.

Yet nowhere among the great Powers was there evinced the slightest indignation, the faintest sense of being affronted, or any disinclination to associate with a nation guilty of such perfidy. On the contrary, they raised a smoke screen about the "complexity of the problem"; it was "difficult to know the real facts at this distance"; "we must not act hastily." Their mouths were full of "aspirations for world peace," of "mediation," and of "new conceptions of human society." Sir John Simon of Great Britain rubbed his hands one over the other, bowed to this side and to that, smirked, and purred about the "two parties to the controversy for whom we testify our friendship impartially." For "after all" was not the League "an association which had been constituted with a view to seeking with the good-will of the parties and in a spirit of fraternity the best means of effecting a reconciliation"? And finally, "it is not a question of expressing a judgment on any point whatever of the controversy." No, indeed, not if Sir John Simon or the representatives of the other big Powers could help it.

The only ones who as members of the League felt their honor touched by the faith-breaking of Japan were the small nations, and to them was left the defense of the authority of the League and the sanctity of the pledged word of nations. Braadland of Norway said that the League should not confine itself to making recommendations and that "the public opinion of the world expects from the League that if either of the parties does not accept or does not respect those recommendations, the League should take appropriate measures in accordance with the provisions of the Covenant." Ortega of Mexico referred sarcastically to the disguising of armed intervention under names "invented by juridical, diplomatic, or political cunning," and added: "Mexico asks that the League of Nations should insure respect for the whole of the provisions of the Covenant. The League should assert as a fact and not as a theory that it will not condone any intervention which takes the form of an invasion of sovereignty." "I desire to say," said Löfgren of Sweden, "that in the opinion of the Swedish government the disembarking of troops and the use of those troops for military operations on the territory of another Power is contrary to the provisions of the League Covenant and the Pact of Paris. If it was intended to expand the conception of legitimate defense to such an extent as has been done in the present case, the maintenance of international order would be rendered impossible." Erich of Finland asked: "Is this League, or is it not, a living force—a real guaranty of security—or merely an institution for discussions, platonic resolutions, or at most mediation?" Zulueta of Spain said that the action of the League in the present emergency would determine whether it was "to be or not to be. Article X was its supreme charter. Evacuation must precede negotiations. . . . We hope that the League will act and that it will do it thoroughly with all the power that the pact provides and all the energy that the world expects." South Africa and Ireland joined in the demand that the League do something to maintain international morality and to preserve its own self-respect.

These clear statements and logical conclusions were like a draft of fresh air in the fetid atmosphere of a crowded room, but they were met by the big Powers with the sneering observation that it is easy for the small countries to talk because it is the strong nations which would have to carry the burden of enforcing the terms of the Covenant. That may be true, but the obvious reply is that it is nevertheless no justification for hypocrisy. If the big Powers are too cowardly or too disingenuous to assume their responsibilities under the Covenant, the honest thing to do would be to admit it and resign from the League and not attempt by evasion and subterfuge to create the impression that the clear and explicit provisions of the Covenant are not being violated. It may be true that the small nations are bold because they have nothing to lose, but they are at least intellectually honest in the present instance, which is a rare and wholesome thing.

What Japan has learned, China has learned also. In his able and eloquent address before the Disarmament Conference Dr. Yen reviewed the events in Manchuria and Shanghai and asked: "Ladies and gentlemen, what are you going to do about it? Are you going to permit that the Covenant and the Pact of Paris crumble to pieces? Are you going to uphold the sanctity of treaties? Are you willing that the peace machinery built up with such toil and such difficulty be destroyed? Is brute force again to be restored to its throne, from which it was pulled down ten or more years ago?" He believed that China, with a history of more than 2,000 years, would weather this storm, but, he said, "we shall come out of it with a new psychology, a new outlook, a new mental attitude, and a new knowledge of the hard facts of life, and upon these new things will be constructed a new orientation of our foreign policy, for we shall know then where we exactly stand." Could the meaning of these words be lost on anyone but the deaf and blind? Yet the big Powers of the League are evidently too stupid and short-sighted to perceive this warning and to realize that the denial of simple justice to China now will turn a nation of 400,000,000 people from a policy of peace toward the world to one of aggressive self-defense. Chinese in Geneva say that because of the Japanese invasion China is now more

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united than ever before. If this unity persists and finally produces a well-organized government, then China will be able to deal with Japan alone, and the big Western Powers which failed China in its hour of need will also learn "where they exactly stand" in its estimation. Goodby to extraterritoriality, goodby to concessions, goodby to trade!

The big Powers may scuttle the League and betray its weaker members, but in all countries people with a sense of justice can make effective some of the provisions of the Covenant despite the treachery of their representatives. In that way enlightened public opinion can make itself a positive force regardless of governments. There is nothing the matter with the machinery of the League; it is only the manhood that is lacking. If the big Powers succeed in dodging and sidestepping the issue raised by Japan they will of course render the League worthless, but only till such a time as a new generation endowed with character and courage arises to revive it and carry through its beneficent aims.

In the Driftway

NO consideration of the American mind is complete without the comic strip. The influence of that phenomenon is beyond measuring. Not only are comic-strip artists paid larger salaries than any other employee on a newspaper; not only does the presence of certain comic strips enormously increase circulation. But the absence of a strip may very well cause a near panic among newspaper readers. A New York journal omitted, one morning, "Harold Teen," a comic strip depicting the doings of a collegiate young man and his boy and girl friends. Ten thousand letters of protest were received by the next morning; law suits were threatened; the telephone exchange of the newspaper had to suspend its regular business entirely and spend all day answering anxious inquiries. The strip appeared on the front page on the day after. When Little Orphan Annie was depicted as ill, not only were the inquiries after her health numbered by the thousands, but at least one gift of perhaps twenty dollars' worth of American beauty roses arrived to cheer her sick-bed. When a careless artist actually had the temerity to kill off one of his minor characters, an amiable young lady, the protests rose in number and frenzy. Gifts of money, advice, indignant alarm, ecstatic appreciation arrive regularly, as the fortunes of the comic-strip characters rise and fall. No wonder the artists are handsomely paid.

* * * * *

THE Drifter has this information about comic strips from a newspaperman who vouched for its veracity and said it only touched the fringes of comic-strip lunacy. If his informant was exaggerating, as newspapermen sometimes do, the Drifter promises to print a correction. But he ventures a guess that here is no exaggeration. So incredible is this tale that it can hardly fail to be true. And if it is true, what is its significance? The comic strip, in its present form, has departed from the old days of Mutt and Jeff, when a slapstick anecdote was told in four or five pictures, ending with Biff! Bang! and a fade-out. Now we have the continued story, the recurrent character. We have dramatic suspense, human interest, pathos, danger, the happy ending. This is, indeed, the only sort of story that thousands, probably millions of readers ever read. Love, adventure, ambition, the acquisition of wealth or the loss of it, the themes of Laura Jean Libbey, Horatio Alger, and the author of Diamond Dick, are combined in a glorious and stimulating melange. From the standpoint of the artist, it is a labor-saving device. He has only to pick his plot from one of a thousand well-worn plots; he has months to tell it, one episode at a time; if it is dull today, no matter—the reader will eagerly wait till tomorrow. Just as innumerable radio owners count the hours until, each night, they can pursue the fortunes of Amos and Andy, so Andy Gump's progress is awaited from morning to morning, and Andy, Min, Chester, Uncle Bim, and the rest are familiars of everyone in the family from the youngest child to the oldest grandsire.

* * * * *

WHAT is the mental age of a nation which gets its literary—one almost said its mental—pabulum from these sources? What chance has an adult, complicated idea, a book that satisfies the classical requirement of the evocation of pity and terror, to make its way in competition so unshakable and so widespread? The Drifter puts these questions not in indignation but as recognition of simple facts. In thinking about America, in attempting to appeal to the reason of Americans, one must remember the comic strip. It is an inalienable part of the American credo.

THE DRIFTER

Correspondence

Hoover or Ritchie

TO THE EDITOR OF THE NATION:

SIR: In boosting Governor Ritchie's Presidential candidacy in *The Nation,* Gerald Johnson omitted mention of Ritchie's principal qualifications for becoming a worthy successor to Herbert Hoover. He said nothing of how the Governor of Maryland has served the Philadelphia Electric Company in turning over to that corporation the State's chief water power at Conowingo. The details of this transaction have been made public by Judson King in a recent bulletin of the National Popular Government League. Mr. King shows how Governor Ritchie, through his pliant Public Service Commission, gave away a natural resource which brings in $20,000,000 in annual profits to the beneficiary and pays to Maryland approximately $400,000 in taxes. He shows also how this was done in such a way that the Consolidated Gas, Electric, and Power Company, which holds a monopoly in Baltimore, should not be bothered with competition. Mr. Johnson might have said further that although this Public Service Commission grants to public-utility monopolies practically all they ask, so that street-railway fares in Baltimore are today the highest in the country for probably the poorest service under most parsimonious management, Governor Ritchie has ignored complaints from citizens' organizations, including the Annapolis Chamber of Commerce, which asked with good cause that the present commission be replaced by one with some regard for the public interest.

Those who approve of President Hoover's servility to the power and other monopolistic interests will not need to worry if Governor Ritchie displaces him.

Baltimore, March 16 SAMUEL DANZIGER

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A Long Life and a Sane One

To the Editor of The Nation:

Sir: Contraceptives are as unscientific as they are biologically unsound. Evolution seems to be the process by which man is forming from an animal to something almost divine. Evolution has resulted in the growth of the human beard, a feature we should now like to eliminate. Mental effort and prayer through the ages, coupled with heredity, might achieve much, but the daily shave will do nothing to stop the persistent growth. Likewise if we wish to diminish the insistence and frequency of the sex urge we must exercise self-control, prayer, and other mental efforts. The reproductive forces, now excessively parasitical, would come to pay tribute to the life forces of the individual and we should probably live longer, freer, and happier lives.

Of course the use of contraceptives will fail to help us or our descendants, for whom we should try to make life easier. The exciting, warlike life of the savage has gradually yielded to the less exciting but saner life of the civilized being. There has come to be less animal pleasure, but on the other hand less pain. Pleasure and pain are being more and more relegated to the intellectual plane. A long life of usefulness rather than a short life of merriment is the drift of today.

Oxford, England, March 4 H. Crawshay Frost

Contributors to This Issue

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Isabel Paterson is on the staff of the New York *Herald Tribune Books,* and is the author of "The Road of the Gods."

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Eda Lou Walton is associate professor of English at Washington Square College, New York University, and the author of "Jane Matthew and Other Poems."

Henry Bamford Parkes is an English writer now living in the United States.

Finance

A Foreign Echo of Our Taxes

When Congress defeated the sales-tax proposal and Representatives began to question whether, after all, it was worth while trying to balance the budget next year, a violent advance occurred in the New York rate of sterling exchange; eight cents one day, five the next. Along with this financial phenomenon went a violent break in the prices of a considerable list of internationally owned American railway bonds. The conclusion was inescapable that a number of foreign owners of American securities had decided to transfer their money to London, despite the fluctuating value of the British currency on foreign markets. Beyond immediate questions of taxation, in the minds of these people, there must have lurked the specter of a possible lapse of the United States from the gold basis. When the House, repenting, agreed to a series of taxes designed to balance the budget, sterling reversed its movement and declined sharply.

We have, nevertheless, had the spectacle of the American dollar, thus far firmly linked with gold, depreciating in value in the world markets. Gold, to be sure, is not depreciating; only the estimated gold value of American obligations was lowered. The incident, coming so soon after we had set up, in the Glass-Steagall law, the machinery necessary to provide whatever gold might be required of us, is humiliating. Some time ago the opinion was ventured in this column that England's lapse from the gold standard last September did not necessarily mean the end of London's primacy among the world's money markets; that in an era when capital is subjected to incredible shocks, risks, and losses, London's being forced off gold might be forgiven, as being less than many other evils. The present is no time to make long-range predictions as to where the world's chief banking center will ultimately be located, but the writer has recently seen a careful British study of London's financial position in which the statement is flatly made that London today, more than ever, is the world's banker.

London, however, is in no haste to assume the crown, in the sense of inviting foreigners to send over their surplus cash for investment or safekeeping. British bankers, headed by the officials of the Bank of England, look upon a rapid appreciation in the pound sterling with undisguised dislike. They recognize, in the current movement from the United States and some quarters on the Continent, one of those headlong rushes of short-term capital, like a nomad horde, which may leave devastation in their wake. An influx of this sort places upon the recipient banks the obligation of finding a profitable use for the money while it remains, and of maintaining adequate gold reserves against the possibility of its sudden withdrawal—and England, being off the gold basis, no longer receives the metal automatically as a result of capital transfers.

Furthermore, higher values for sterling on foreign markets make it more costly for the outside world to buy British goods, and less costly for the British citizen to buy foreign goods, thereby reducing still further the slender advantages which British trade has derived from a depreciated currency. The possible effect of a rising rate for sterling upon British internal prices is in utter confusion. Such a rise, deliberately brought about by a stiff money policy such as the British enforced when they were in process of resuming gold payments in 1925, makes for deflation and lower prices; but a rise which occurs in spite of the discouragement of low English money rates might conceivably have the opposite result.

S. Palmer Harman

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SPRING BOOK SECTION

The Nation

Vol. CXXXIV, No. 3484 Wednesday, April 13, 1932

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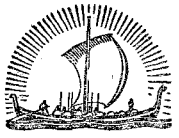

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Spring Book Section

Toward a New Canon

By CARL VAN DOREN

THE canon of American literature refuses to stay fixed. Thirty, even twenty, years ago it seemed to many observers that the end of a literary epoch had been reached and that the elder classics were secure on solid thrones. Bearded and benevolent, the faces of Bryant, Longfellow, Whittier, Lowell, Holmes, and sometimes (rather oddly) Whitman, looked down unchallenged from the walls of schoolrooms. Emerson was the American philosopher, Irving the American essayist, Cooper the American romancer, Hawthorne the American explorer of the soul, Poe the American unhappy poet (unhappy on account of his bad habits), Thoreau the American hermit, Mark Twain the American humorist (barely a man of letters), Henry James the American expatriate, and Howells the American Academy. Here were fifteen apostles set in a rigid eminence, braced by minor figures grouped more randomly about them.

Where is that accepted canon now? Emerson and Hawthorne and Thoreau, risen dramatically above Bryant, Longfellow, Whittier, Holmes, and Lowell, stand in the rarer company of Poe and Whitman. Irving and Howells have shrunk and faded. Cooper has scarcely held his own. Mark Twain seems a great man of letters as well as a great man. Henry James seems a brilliant artist whatever nation he belongs to. Herman Melville has thrust himself by main strength, and Emily Dickinson has gently slipped, into the canon. Several writers of the past forty years now mingle on virtually even terms with the sacred band.

There is no use trying to calculate how much the rank of some of these elder classics was due to the vested interest of publishers who had issued collected editions, or of teachers in schools and colleges who knew how to "teach" Longfellow but not Emily Dickinson, Howells but not Dreiser, Irving but not Mencken. Vested interests were not all. A good many men and women taught to read in the nineteenth century could not endure to read about the twentieth when they saw it bared in literature. Patriotism and propriety had a hand. So, of course, had the natural inertia with which each age resists the age that follows it. But all these vested interests, this provincialism and patriotism and propriety and inertia, have been threatened. They would be overwhelmed if they were aware of their defeat by the rush with which the literature of the United States has advanced in two or three decades from a point of relative inferiority to a point where it is on the whole equaled only by the literature of Germany among its present contemporaries.

No doubt a good many years will have to pass before the traditional canon is thoroughly revised and Americans are ready to distinguish between their major and their minor prophets. Not much help can be expected from the American Academy or from the universities. They will do no more than wait till the work has been done by actual workers. Then they will hold on to the revised canon with stubborn opposition to any further changes which some later age may have to insist upon.

When the new canon has been arrived at, and before it has in turn been superseded, Ludwig Lewisohn* will be seen to have done as much for the revision as any single man. His "Expression in America" is a critical milestone. He has done what was most needed to be done. Detaching himself from the more myopic controversies which go on in the United States, he has from the distance of his exile looked back with a commanding eye. His point of view is high as well as distant. He has not even mentioned the numerous ephemerides with which most historians of American literature clutter their pages. He has put down the previously mighty and exalted the previously humble without self-conscious argument. And this he has done not in literary contentiousness but in obedience to the most rigorous and lofty principles by which the whole course of American literature has ever been estimated.

Literature he regards as "the fullest and most continuous expression of the totality of man's life." It is "part of the biologic process. Man is, to put it on the humblest plane, a speaking and singing animal." Literature may formerly have been "an elegant diversion or an illustration of the foreknown and fixed," but it has become "moral research, a road to salvation, the bread of life." Ancient authority having disappeared, literature "must teach and deliver in a new and flexible sense or it is meaningless. Scripture, I may repeat, having become literature, it was necessary for literature to become scripture." The man of letters cannot be overlooked or undervalued. He "lives with the highest awareness his day in human history; unconsciously or consciously he shapes his experience into a work which implies such a universe as he dreams or can endure, or else implies the repudiation of the world and the triumph, however pessimistic, of man's spirit over the hostile gods." The man of letters, having this responsibility, must be held strictly to account. "Nothing avails except stringent veracity or the sovereign creative imagination."

Other historians of American literature might perhaps have agreed with these strong doctrines if they had heard of them. In a sense, all general statements are true. It is the application of them to special instances that matters. Mr. Lewisohn has not held back his hand when it comes to his applications. On many points he may be disagreed with. He is, after all, himself only one man with passions, susceptibilities, prejudices. But he has here freed himself as far as it is perhaps possible from idiosyncrasies of taste and opinion. He has with astounding learning and sympathy brought the whole of American literature before the bar of his own judgment, and there has handed down his verdicts with the most scrupulous judicial austerity.

Mr. Lewisohn admits so little divorce between literature and life that his book is naturally more than a study of the literary production of the United States. "All men,"

* "Expression in America." By Ludwig Lewisohn. Harper and Brothers. $4.

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he quotes from Emerson, "live by truth and stand in need of expression. . . . The man is only half himself, the other half is his expression." "Expression in America" amounts consequently to a kind of spiritual history. Here, studied with a force and range and point and beauty rarely found in literary historians, are the successive steps which the United States has taken in the process of becoming aware of itself, of overcoming its hesitant, polite beginnings at self-expression, of admitting to the record the world of consciousness outside the genteel tradition, of engaging in a violent critical debate between decorum and candor, of at last standing up among the literary nations of the earth. The book, incidentally a superb history of American literature, is primarily a moral epic of America. It could hardly have been written before 1929. As much as any single book is likely soon to do, it sums up the intellectual achievements of the United States in a time of drastic change.

If Mr. Lewisohn is proved by events to have been a bad prophet, it will be because his country either could not or would not hold itself up to the level of his prophetic demands. They are simply the true demands of great literature anywhere. Without attention to them the United States will not have a great literature or recognize it when it has come.

The Critic's Dilemma

III. Pure Criticism

By JOSEPH WOOD KRUTCH

THE two previous articles in the present series discussed the dilemma of the critic who is obliged to pronounce judgments at the same time that he distrusts the only basis upon which such judgments can be made. Literary history reminds him that mutually destructive theories of the nature of art have been held by the most distinguished critics of the past, and introspection makes it clear that when he pretends to discuss a work of literature as though it were an objective fact he is, in reality, discussing an apperception of it which is, in no small measure, influenced by his own experience and temperament. Yet he must strive for some sort of objectivity, for some degree of detachment, unless he is willing to sink to the level of the most arbitrary of impressionists and to rest content with so-called critiques which are, in fact, no more than mere reveries suggested by the theme of the work he is pretending to criticize. The purpose of this concluding article is to ask to what extent the critic may function without too obviously impaling himself on the horns of his dilemma. It will suggest some of the things which he may undertake to do while preserving himself from mere impressionism on the one hand and mere dogmatism on the other, and it will then offer some apology for those divagations into the personal which cannot be avoided entirely.

Granted, then, that literary criticism must stop short of the plainly dogmatic, there does, nevertheless, remain a considerable field over which it may speculate with relative detachment as well as with some profit, and certain portions of that field may be described very briefly. In the first place, criticism may very legitimately concern itself with general theories of the nature and function of art—provided only that these theories are sufficiently general to make room for all the variety which the corpus of literature actually includes and do not, like some, churlishly rule out Shakespeare because he has no social doctrine or Mr. Shaw because he has. In the second place, it may, when it leaves inclusive generalization to deal with either particular works or groups of work, certainly concern itself with what may be called "discrimination," in contradistinction to "judgment." It may, that is to say, seek to distinguish between various styles of literature and to aid the reader in his effort to enter into a work—both by analyzing the particular kind of satisfaction which it proposes to give and by investigating the premises upon which its structure is erected. Thus Racine's excellence may usefully be discriminated from Zola's. Finally, the critic may, still without ceasing to maintain a relative detachment, judge a work, not absolutely, but in accordance with what we shall call its functional effectiveness. He may, that is to say, seek to discover how successfully it achieves what appears to be its purpose—how thrillingly a melodrama wreaks our hate upon its villain, or how vividly a work of another class makes us aware of those sights, or sounds, or emotions the sensitivity to which it is trying to cultivate.

Even such processes as those which have just been described are, moreover, only relatively impersonal, for it is obvious that even they involve the personal experience of a critic whose knowledge and susceptibility are individual, and who can judge of the effect which may be produced upon another only by the effect produced upon him. Literature differs from geometry by the fact that it inevitably deals with materials which have a human significance, and hence the criticism of it cannot wholly detach itself from the influence of those materials and the critic's attitude toward them. The latter is most nearly impersonal when he is "discriminating" rather than evaluating, or when he is attempting to judge the effectiveness rather than the worth of any particular work, but he is not absolutely impersonal even then, and criticism rarely has—or rarely should have—confined itself exclusively to those processes which may be carried on in even this relatively impersonal way. It passes almost imperceptibly to matters which more and more intimately involve the personality of the critic.

Consider, for example, the fact that both language and literature are in their very nature allusive. To the extent that the former is so, even the dictionary undertakes a kind of interpretative criticism when it endeavors to define the meaning of a word, and in so doing is obliged to indicate those associations and connotations which have grown up in the minds of various individuals and gradually been generalized to such an extent that they may fairly be called a part of the word's meaning, even though they are not so clearly defined or so inevitably understood as its primary significance. In a similar fashion the author of those ex-

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planatory notes which accompany the school text of a classic is doing the same sort of thing when he takes something out of his own mind and puts it into the mind of the pupil by explaining that Horace's "ab ovo" refers to the strange birth of Helen, or that Shakespeare refers to a "wooden O" because some Elizabethan theaters were oval. No one could accuse the lexicographer or the editor of mingling too much of himself in his exegesis or of mistaking what T. S. Eliot calls "a weak creative impulse" for a critical one. Yet the lexicographer is attempting to prepare the mind of the consultant by furnishing it with associations which will render its apperception identical with his own, and since the associations of all words are not fixed and unvarying, he is beginning to impose upon another "interpretations" which have some elements of the personal. What is true of words is, moreover, true to a much greater extent of all allusions to historical characters or familiar situations. Phrases like "the glory that was Greece" or "I fling my cap for polish and for Pope" actually have a content which varies from ear to ear, and yet it is, notoriously, upon such imperfectly defined contents that the effect of the more imaginative kinds of literature depends. In poetry, as Santayana has so brilliantly remarked, "feeling is transferred by contagion," and under its influence "minds radiate from a somewhat similar core of sensation, from the same vital mood, into the most diverse and incommunicable images."

Surely the most determined of impersonal critics could not stop short of the effort to describe what the phrase "the glory that was Greece" meant to the poet who wrote it, but it is nevertheless difficult to see how he can always be sure that he is distinguishing what it meant to its author from what it means to him. He might compile a list of the books which Poe is known to have read, and he might, by considering all the latter's knowledge of Greece in connection with all the circumstances under which he acquired it, seek to form some conception of just what—for Poe—this "glory" was. But he would nevertheless be compelled to feel the influence of his own associations, to describe—in part at least—what the phrase meant to him as well as what it meant to Poe. And once he had done that, the road, entirely deprived of landmarks, would lie open to the most personal of interpretations. If any book that is read becomes inevitably a kind of collaboration between author and reader; if the thing which happens in the reader's mind is the result of the associations formed between the words of the book and the ideas in his mind; if—in a word—the aesthetic experience is the result of an apperception rather than of a perception, then any attempt to describe it must involve something personal, and what we must have is, after all, that now so much despised something which was once admiringly described as "the adventures of the soul among masterpieces." All that a repudiation of it can amount to is a determination not to cultivate too extravagantly the idiosyncratic, a determination to keep as close as one can to the mind of the author and to concern oneself as far as possible with those associations which appear to be common to a considerable number of persons. And that is, indeed, all that can possibly be the result of attempting to heed the rhetorically effective pronunciamientos of that new school of critics who declare that a work of literature must be considered purely for what it is rather than for what it is capable of suggesting in the mental context of the critic. Actually it can never be detached from that context, and the difference between impressionism and "objective criticism" is merely the difference between a criticism which struggles against and a criticism which yields itself to the influence of the purely personal element in our reaction to any work of art.

Nor does it seem possible, once we have gone this far, to assert that a critic becomes worthless just as soon as his opinions are seen to be influenced in even the slightest degree by his moral, social, or even political opinions. They inevitably influence his judgment of a literary work because they inevitably influence the effect which it has upon him, and, accordingly, help to determine what—for him—it *is*. How, to return again to a simple example, can the effect which a melodrama has upon us fail to be influenced in some degree by the things for which the hero and the villain stand, how can we possibly raise ourselves above the fact that the downfall of the latter will be more satisfying, more "right," and more "beautiful" if the hero happens to be "on our side"? And what is true of melodrama with its crude appeal to gross convictions is true to a less extent of those other forms of literature which make their appeal to more refined and less easily analyzed passions and preferences.

A "pure" aesthetic emotion—if it still remains aesthetic at all—is doubtless possible in contemplating the purely formal perfection of a mathematical demonstration which, because it *is* mathematical, is wholly without content. Perhaps also, and for the sake of argument, we may admit that such a "pure" aesthetic experience is also possible in the presence of certain kinds of music and certain very abstract forms of painting. But as long as literature uses words, and as long as words refer to things which awaken desire or disgust or hate or love or fear, then just so long must the experience which it produces fall to some degree short of the "purely" aesthetic. Just so long also will the criticism of it fail to achieve that "purity" of which the more fastidious critics often speak; and there is only one thing which we can reasonably expect. We can ask only that the critic shall be aware of the personal nature of his reactions as well as of the arbitrary character of his standards, and that, just in proportion as he fails to maintain an absolute detachment, he will cultivate that underlying skepticism which softens the dogmatism from which we cannot escape so long as we undertake to say anything at all.

Kings Bow Their Heads

By ROBERT LIDDELL LOWE

Death's hands, fastidious and thin,
Immaculate as bone,
Do more than scrupulously ravel skin
From skeleton.

These hands, diminishing the pulse,
Do more than snap the sense
Or dry the dream within the pallid skull's
Circumference.

Such gifts of dignity they bring—
The inelastic dead
Though strengthless now command the proudest king
To bow his head.

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Books

Emerson

The Life of Emerson. By Van Wyck Brooks. E. P. Dutton and Company. $3.

THE present biography represents the completion of a task begun by Van Wyck Brooks several years ago. It is more than three times as long as the torso ("Emerson and Others") published in 1927, and the parts duplicating that have apparently been extensively rewritten. What is most interesting about it is its method. Mr. Brooks has evidently worked his way through the whole calendar of Emerson's writings, particularly the letters and the "Journals," and woven them together into a fresh and harmonious pattern. To only a slight extent has he used material to be found outside of his subject's own written word. The result is in many ways happy. Emerson's strength, even in his shortest essays, was in the sentence, in the quality of the separate bits of mosaic, and not in the pattern that they formed. "What I write to fill up the gaps of a chapter," he once observed, "is hard and cold, is grammar and logic; there is no magic in it; I do not wish to see it again." And one result of this feeling was a frequent refusal to supply connective tissue, so that the logical link between his ringing aphorisms is often obscure, and sometimes non-existent. Mr. Brooks supplies this connective tissue, and his selection and arrangement are adroit. The effect is much as if an Emerson grown more lucid, less apocalyptic and sententious, had written an autobiography in the third person.

Mr. Brooks's volume, in short, has the virtues of the "new" biography and escapes its leading vices. There is no apparatus of scholarship—no footnotes, citation of authorities, hints of the biographer's own difficulties or research. When Mr. Brooks's building was completed, the scaffolding, as Matthew Josephson would put it, was removed. Nor need one on that account doubt the authenticity of the reveries and moods, the inner stream of thought, attributed to Emerson, for in every case, so far as this reviewer is aware, these passages are drawn almost verbatim from the subject's own writings.

Yet though such a method has very real advantages, it has also its insurmountable limitations. One gets an admirable picture of Emerson's life as it probably seemed to the man himself; one gets a much vaguer idea of what it looked like from the outside. The method virtually condemns the biographer to immerse himself in his subject's mind, to take a view that is more than "sympathetic," that is, indeed, empathetic. To move outside of Emerson, to shift now and then to a viewpoint that was critical or alien, would have been, with this method, merely confusing. Mr. Brooks has avoided this artistic error, but he has not done so without paying a price. The chief criticism made of his "Ordeal of Mark Twain" and "The Pilgrimage of Henry James" was that, if they were not too hostile toward their subjects, at least each rode a particular thesis too hard. It is now as if, sensitive to these criticisms, Mr. Brooks were afraid of having any thesis at all, and certainly of having any invidious one. The general impression one carries away from this volume is of a portrait too pious, and hence blurred. You cannot leave out the warts, as Boswell knew, without taking something characteristic out of the face, and the chief weakness of Mr. Brooks's volume is that it does not give the reader a sufficiently definite sense of Emerson's limitations. It is not as if Mr. Brooks did not know what these limitations were. In his earlier volumes he even overstated them. In "The Wine of the Puritans" (1909) he hinted that Emerson was "a lofty and inspired sophist who begs the whole question of life, and whose sophism is the direct result of a provincial training." In "America's Coming-of-Age" (1915) he spoke of Emerson's style—"that strange fine ventriloquism, that attenuated voice coming from a great distance, which so often strikes one as a continual falsetto." And other comments were just as harsh: "It would be hard to say whether Emerson more keenly relished saintliness or shrewdness. . . . He never dreamed of molding society, and he was incapable of an effective social ideal. . . . The truth is that Emerson was not interested in human life; he cared nothing for experience or emotion, possessing so little himself." And in "Letters and Leadership" (1918) he remarked how closely Emerson's doctrine of private perfectibility and self-reliance was connected with the "spontaneous man" of Rousseau. To these limitations of doctrine we should add certain personal limitations—Emerson's coldness; his strains of puritanism; his comparative anaesthesia to music, painting, sculpture, architecture, and other beauties apart from those of literature, character, and nature—of all of which we get only the faintest hints from the present volume.

Yet Mr. Brooks has produced, in spite of this defect, one of the notable biographies of the last few years. No one can question the success with which he has conveyed the nobility and serenity of the man himself, and the essence of all that was most inspiriting in his thought. For Emerson, as Santayana has so justly concluded, if not a star of the first magnitude, is certainly a fixed star in the firmament of philosophy: "Alone as yet among Americans, he may be said to have won a place there, if not by the originality of his thought, at least by the originality and beauty of the expression he gave to thoughts that are old and imperishable."

HENRY HAZLITT

Autobiography of an Idealist

American Outpost. By Upton Sinclair. Farrar and Rinehart. $2.50.

THIS is the first instalment of Mr. Sinclair's autobiography, and it carries him up to his second marriage on the eve of the Great War. It is not a profound book either by accident or intention, but it tells of a unique American career, and one which, in these dismal days, is coming to seem more significant than it has at any time since it became a matter of public interest. The tone of the book, lightly humorous, will rather surprise many of Mr. Sinclair's readers, and it is a pity that he could not have adopted it on some earlier occasion. It shows us Upton Sinclair as a likable human being and one who has not taken his difficulties too heavily. Too frequently the uninformed have figured him to themselves and the world as a solemn, priggish chap who gets no fun out of life and certainly never provides any for other people. Yet as Charlie Chaplin says, Sinclair habitually talks through a smile.

Sinclair is a more American American than many of those who boast about their hundred-per-centism. He is, moreover and most delightfully, a Southerner. His ancestors were all people of substance, and many of them, on the paternal side, served their country as naval officers. (We are shortly to be treated to a historical account of these people, written by Albert Mordell.) Upton himself came from a branch of the family that had gradually petered out, and his father was a traveling salesman and a drunkard, although by his son's account a decent sort of man withal. The sense of family loyalty which is characteristic of Southerners made it possible for Upton to alternate, during childhood and youth, between abject poverty and the fleshpots of capitalistic luxury. He finds in this circumstance the origin of his acute sense of the injustice of maldistribution of the social income. I have been told by persons who knew them that Sinclair's Baltimore relatives were complete Babbitts,

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and Sinclair's own account confirms that verdict with the qualification, so often to be made, that they were generous and indulgent of eccentricity in a relative. In spite of the fact that he tries to exculpate himself from the charge of snobbery in dealing with his high-toned connections, it seems to me that Sinclair takes a rather naive delight in dwelling upon the respectability of his connections. And I recall that when introducing Bertrand Russell to a Los Angeles audience recently, he dwelt with pleasure on Russell's possession of a title.

As he honestly says, he had all the makings of an insufferable snob in him as a youth, and I venture the speculation that his annoying attitude of didactically giving instruction to his readers about the meaning of social phenomena is an unconscious hangover of his feeling that he is just a little better than his readers. This quality detracts fatally from the charm of his work except in this book, where he hints at the genesis of the peculiarity. For essentially Sinclair is a charming man. Once you have met him you always feel a warmth of regard for him. One of the principal merits of this book is that it will make people predisposed to be hostile to him for his intellectual principles see him as he really is—though if you really want to quarrel with him he provides plenty of material even here!

There is surprisingly little in this book that he has not told in bits and pieces elsewhere in his numerous novels and pamphlets. Moreover, Floyd Dell made good use of much of it in his monograph. But when it is presented as a consecutive story, we are able to see it at better advantage than ever before; this extraordinary story of poverty, hack writing, blind idealism, scandal from publications without accompanying money success, scandal in his private life, utopian activities, etc. Numerous Sinclairian portraits are scattered through the book: of people as different as Walter Hines Page, Theodore Roosevelt, George Herron, George Sterling, Edward MacDowell, Paul Elmer More, and many more. From his record it appears that Sinclair was always a romantic idealist. His rebellion stemmed not from Marx but from Shelley. His first aspiration was to be a lyric poet! But his form was not to be verse; it was to be the novel. It is perfectly plain that he could have had a typical, successful, literary career had he not, by an accident, been introduced to socialism. He had had a fair success with romantic novels, and had done one historical novel of unusual excellence, "Manassas," when it was suggested to him that he turn from chattel slavery to wage slavery. The result was "The Jungle" and fame. But the curious thing is that from this autobiography no one can find out when and where Sinclair became a Socialist in the sense that he became a master of radical economics. He was early aware—but how he arrived at the position he does not make clear—of the economic genesis of opinion and similar doctrines which have until the last ten years or so been the peculiar property of Socialists. But he remained for a long time—and even today remains so to a very great extent—a romantic idealist who dressed himself up in the garments of socialism.

In many ways his intellectual history is like that of Lincoln Steffens, with the difference that he always had formulae to explain the materials he handled as a muckraker and a scheme for rearranging society according to a more desirable pattern. But as a thinker he was no deeper nor any more cogent. He was fooled in about the same ways and quite as often as Steffens. Indeed, his susceptibility to idealistic appeals frequently led him astray farther than Steffens ever went. I refer to his seduction by the war propaganda. And it is the fact that he can be herded along with Steffens that makes him distinctly a figure of a generation now rapidly passing. It explains why the younger writers of a radical tendency find almost as much fault with him as his bourgeois opponents. They admire him for his past record of rebellion. They read his books not as literature but as pamphlets. But it can hardly be said that they follow him as a master, which should be his fate at this time in his life.

When he gets around to telling the rest of his story, Sinclair will have recorded one of the strangest of American careers. I should be disappointed indeed did he not undertake a second volume, for it is more than likely that the complete record will be one of his most enduring books. Without abandoning any of his charming humor, he might profitably, in future volumes, indicate his capability of experiencing deep emotions in the crises of his career. Or does he lack deep emotions?

C. HARTLEY GRATTAN

A Transient Sickness

Thurso's Landing. By Robinson Jeffers. Horace Liveright. $2.50.

THE problems of suffering and death and of the ultimate extinction of humanity will, so far as one can see, be problems in any society; but the extent to which they occupy men's minds, as well as the attitudes men take toward them, may, as history shows, vary with changes in the social structure. No one can doubt the depth of Robinson Jeffers's despair, but it is, as Newton Arvin once pointed out in the *New Freeman,* a strange fact that, whenever Jeffers ventures to make a specific indictment of the civilization he hates, he makes it in terms very similar to those in which other men express, not a cosmic despair, but a recognition of the destruction that must be done before a better society can be created. In this book, for example, there is a poem on Edison:

> A great toy-maker, light-bringer, patient
> Finder of powers that were promptly applied to foolish and mean
> Purposes; a man full of benevolence,
> Eager for knowledge, has dropped his tools and forgotten contrivance.
> Why must the careful gifts of good men
> Narrow the lives and erode the souls of people, as trader's Whiskey unravels a run of savages?

There are at least two answers to the question Jeffers asks; he has seen only one of them. A man of his caliber could, obviously, be satisfied with no easy solution. Unable in the years when his creative powers were taking shape to find any purpose in whose service they might be employed, he concluded that "civilization is a transient sickness." To express that conviction he has used in his poems the most violent symbols he could invent. Of human nature he here says:

> It is rather ignoble in its quiet times, mean in its pleasures,
> Slavish in the mass: but at stricken moments it can shine feebly against the dark magnificence of things.

As a matter of fact, human nature does not shine feebly in Jeffers's poems. It flames in terrible heroism. "Thurso's Landing" is perhaps the most human poem he has written, in the sense that its characters act from comprehensible motives. It is the story of Reave Thurso's determination, senselessly cruel in the small affairs of life but wholly majestic when matched against agony and the certainty of death. It moves swiftly, in lines terser and firmer than those the poet has hitherto composed, sweeping forward on the wings of an imagery even nobler than that we have known.

There is, one cannot deny, a kind of validity in this and all of Jeffers's poems; such power was not born of self-deceit. But the validity is there, not because his vision is inevitably true, but because it is a possible truth. He sees only the way of death, and there is a possibility that men may take the way of death. But men are not likely to go that way without struggle. Even Jeffers struggles, though he does not wish to. There

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is a parable of the real Jeffers in his own Margrave, who tries to examine his heart-beat while he thinks of his approaching hanging, but whose scientific objectivity yields to his fear of death. In Jeffers it is his passion for life that overcomes the calmness with which he endeavors to contemplate the annihilation of the race. But that passion serves only to lend the vision of annihilation power and beauty. If that passion had been, at the outset, directed into other channels, what might it not have accomplished? Helen says of Reave Thurso:

> . . . he was like a king in some ways, and if he
> had found any great thing to do
> He might have done greatly.

That, one feels, might be Robinson Jeffers's epitaph.

GRANVILLE HICKS

The Street as Hero

Magnolia Street. By Louis Golding. Farrar and Rinehart. $2.50.

THE novel of the future, an English reviewer recently observed, may do without characters. Individuals will no longer be the narrative's focal points. Instead, the group—social, ethnic, geographic—will be treated, not as an aggregate, but as an organism whose development will furnish the backbone of the story. The reviewer selected a few books of today as straws showing the direction of the wind. Among them were Huxley's "Brave New World," Priestley's "The Good Companions," and Golding's "Magnolia Street." There may be something in this contention, even though two of the examples chosen are hardly relevant. Mr. Huxley, for instance, creates in "Brave New World" a novel in which the individual is *designedly* absent. Thus it becomes a satire on, rather than an example of, the characterless novel. As for "The Good Companions," it is such a twopenny piece of work that it can hardly be said to show a trend toward anything, unless it be Mr. Priestley's increasingly shrewd awareness of what the public wants.

But "Magnolia Street" is a different story. In a very real sense it *is* a characterless novel. True enough, it contains some half a hundred characters, all carefully though not deeply studied; but it has no hero, no heroine, no villain. As the title implies, it tells the story of a street, Magnolia Street in Doomington, England, and of its Jewish and Gentile dwellers. (Mr. Golding's hand with Jewish characters, by the way, is far more dextrous than that of Israel Zangwill, to whom he has been compared.) The fortunes of the characters are followed in some detail from the year 1910 to the year 1930, when the Magnolia Street party finally reunites them; but the reader's attention is carefully led away, by the cleverest kind of stage management, from any individual character that might happen to strike his fancy; and it is the Street itself, with all its jealousies and loves and vicissitudes, that gradually begins to take possession of the imagination. This is Mr. Golding's aim—to evoke a community, all of whose component members, from Battling Kid Shulman down to Wilfred Derricks, the Doomington Nightingale, are created equal and remain so; while the community itself undergoes a series of shifts and reversals and changes of all kinds. Mr. Golding manipulates his Poysers and Emmanuels and Derrickses and Coopers and Bermans and Seipels and Winbergs and Billigs and Wrights and Hubbards and Edelmans and Stanleys and Carters and Shulmans and Feivels with the most amazing skill, as if he had learned the string-and-finger art from those marionettists so brilliantly described in his "Sicilian Noon." But "Magnolia Street" is more than a mere triumph of manipulation. Despite the kaleidoscopic technique which shuttles back and forth the most complicated array of individuals in pairs and trios and families, the story of Magnolia Street itself pushes ahead with terrific drive and rapidity. One is astonished to note that the book contains 525 pages; its tempo is that of a much briefer narrative. And the story is not merely interesting. It is moving, humorous, and pathetic; and, though they are rare, it contains moments of real beauty. Few novels of the past ten years have been more successful in recapturing that unique emotion we all feel for the place in which, as children, we grew up. No matter how illustrious our later careers may come to be, the street of our childhood retains a certain superiority, a secret glamor—even though we may hate its very memory—which arises partly from sentiment but also in part from a realization that the deepest roots of our being were formed there.

"Magnolia Street" is at present enjoying a deservedly popular success in England, and it should be widely read here also. It will be the first of Mr. Golding's books to enjoy anything like a moderate-sized audience. This is a good opportunity, therefore, to refer readers back to the author's earlier books, particularly "The Miracle Boy" and "The Prince or Somebody." They are very different from "Magnolia Street"—Mr. Golding is one of the most genuinely versatile of living novelists. They are as strange as "Magnolia Street" is normal; their humor is as esoteric as that of "Magnolia Street" is hearty and jovial; their characters are as eccentric and knotted as those of "Magnolia Street" are simple and comprehensible. Some of Mr. Golding's admirers (the writer is one) will hope for a return to the brilliance and the baroque beauty of these earlier books. "Magnolia Street," though by no means a great book, is a remarkable achievement; yet it may turn out that Mr. Golding's deeper talents exert themselves best in a peculiar kind of intense tragical farce, as in "The Miracle Boy," rather than in the crowded community-narrative of "Magnolia Street."

CLIFTON FADIMAN

Arabian Desert

Arabia Felix: Across the "Empty Quarter" of Arabia. By Bertram Thomas. With a Foreword by Colonel T. E. Lawrence. Charles Scribner's Sons. $4.

THEIR long financial and industrial supremacy, which provided leisure and means for travel, and their enormous empire, which provided occasions, space, and complex motives, combined to turn Englishmen into the farthest ranging, the most purposeful and persistent travelers of modern time. With what might be called an extra-imperial arrogance they have felt challenged by the blank spots on the world map, and those marked dangerous. The excitements of these journeys, since the traveler was likely to be by self-selection an inquisitive, observant, note-taking sort of man, provided the materials for the richest travel literature any people has produced. Egypt, equatorial Africa, South Africa, Persia, Turkey, South America, the archipelagoes of the Pacific, Malaysia, Arabia—each has at least one good English book for a witness of its special charm.

But Arabia has been blessed above the others. So many are the fine books devoted to it—Doughty, Burton, Palgrave, T. E. Lawrence at once come to mind—that one may think of Arabia as a province of English literature. Doughty, indeed, could be added to the scriptures of Arabia; but in each of them there is in varying degree the same quality of Biblical impressiveness, evoked perhaps by the religion of the land, which interjects ritual gestures into the conduct of each Arab day, and blessings and fragments of prayer into daily speech; or by the language itself, which sets naturally into poetic molds; or by the tragic landscapes, which make infinity and eternity almost palpable to the senses.

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Mr. Thomas's book, though it is determinedly modest and unpretentious, also has this quality, and his work may be accepted as fit for the great company of English books on Arabia which it joins. It is, moreover, the account of a heroic enterprise, as travel in Arabia must needs be, of an exploration that brings an enormous, unknown area into the ken of geography, and has served several other sciences as well.

The Rub Al Khali is a vast extent of the South Arabian desert which has never been crossed before by an Occidental and never perhaps in its whole extent by any human being. Its Arabic name is also its description, the "empty quarter," the most desert part of the desert. Mr. Thomas had been baffled in an earlier expedition. This time he attempted it without making his plans known, from a new starting-place, a small port on the Arabian Sea. He traveled with relays of men and camels. The hardships were heavy. He had to endure even more than his Arab camel men, for while they rested he made geological and geodetic surveys, filmed and photographed, collected plants, and mounted biological specimens; and made anthropological observations which provided Sir Arthur Keith with enough data for interesting speculations on the racial identity of the South Arabian tribes, ethnologically a distinct variant from the tribes to the north. The expedition was carefully planned and organized and ably led, but it would have failed, as Mr. Thomas admits, had not the authority of Ibn Saud extended to this region and imposed peace where peace was never known before.

Mr. Thomas gives us not only the incidents of the expedition but the personalities of his Arab escort. Through them, through their peculiar obsessive sense of religion, their naive incapacity to understand that there is a world outside in which there are no nomads, through their affection and anxiety for their camels, their stories of crafty warriors, their ribaldry, and their fears, we have created for us the human climate which makes it possible for us to participate imaginatively in the adventure. The author honors his readers. There is no faking of excitements in his book. Rather, one feels the unconscious assumption on his part that what has interested one intelligent man will interest others. For the studious, Mr. Thomas has provided full appendixes detailing the scientific elements of the adventure.

ISIDOR SCHNEIDER

The Man with One Idea

The Tragedy of Henry Ford. By Jonathan Norton Leonard. G. P. Putnam's Sons. $3.

TRAGEDIES that provide almost continuous laughter are rather rare. Yet this book, on the whole, justifies its title; though opened at random it will evoke a smile, and several episodes are as uproariously comic as the broader farce scenes of "Penguin Island." And nowhere has the author striven for comic effect. On the contrary, he has exercised commendable restraint, realizing that it would be impossible to invent Henry Ford and injudicious to touch him up. The tragedy, as well as the humor, is in the immense disproportion between the man and the events which produced him.

Mr. Leonard confesses that he was moved to begin this study of Henry Ford by burning moral indignation. He saw Ford as the "evil genius of twentieth-century America, a first cause" of all that is cheap and ugly in our era, from "rusty tin cans" to the hypocrisy of prohibition and the worship of standardized ignorance. He was horrified by the inhuman processes of speeded-up mass production in the great factories; and by the Ford by-product of petty tyranny over private lives through the system of espionage and arbitrary interference, inevitably producing sullen, cowed resentment.

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As Mr. Leonard gathered his material and began to compose it, the emphasis shifted. At the last he found himself pitying the man Henry Ford, deciding that Ford was no worse than other captains of industry, perhaps not so bad as some. "His motives were often benign . . . He really wanted to use his unprecedented wealth to help humanity, point out the various errors of which it was guilty . . ." Yet Ford's altruistic endeavors merely exposed him to the onslaught of "cranks, fanatics, even criminals." He became a national and then an international joke. As a secondary consequence he grew embittered, and once at least he sought revenge for his disappointment—when he was defeated for the Senate. Again the result was pure farce. Finally and tragically, he was passed by the procession he had led so long. He lost his place at the head of the long industrial assembly line; and the line goes on. And still he does not know what it was all about, any more than the fabled fly on the wheel.

Mr. Leonard gives the bare facts of Ford's early life briefly, regarding amplification as an unfruitful task. Ford was born in 1863 on a farm near Dearborn, Michigan. His father was an Irish immigrant, his mother of Pennsylvania Dutch stock. Like all boys, he tinkered with mechanical contraptions. Drifting naturally to Detroit, he found intermittent employment in its machine shops. When out of work he retreated to the paternal farm. He built the first Ford in 1893, drove it for three years, then sold it for $200 and built some more, one at a time, privately. At forty he had saved no money, and had resigned from his one important job as chief engineer with the Detroit Automobile Company. He had acquired a wife and son; "he made an unfortunate personal impression and had few friends." Nevertheless, in 1903 he managed to collect, "in driblets," the $28,000 capital for the Ford Motor Company. The money was put up by the Dodge brothers, the savings of their machine shop; by a coal-dealer named Malcolmson, and others unknown to fame. Ford contributed his one idea, to make a cheap car for the large public. He stuck to that like glue, breaking successively with his backers and associates, and buying up a majority of the company's stock. Within five years he had the control. Within ten years he was a billionaire.

Mr. Leonard thinks it was the unproductiveness of war that stirred Ford to his first large effort toward benefiting humanity. But he had achieved his only original objective. He had nowhere to go from there. He could make his car a little cheaper, perhaps; but otherwise he dared not entertain any thought of change, because that would have entailed abandoning the great idea. The money came pouring in, and what was he to do with it? One day the door to his office was left open for a few minutes, and the eloquent and undoubtedly well-meaning Madame Rosika Schwimmer entered. Ford embarked on the Peace Ship, in one sense his first flivver.

The chapter on the Peace Ship is brilliant selective rewriting. Every detail is incredible and precious. The loading of Noah's ark must have been tame compared to the scene of the sailing of the Oscar II. A mob of curious idlers had gathered at the dock. Reporters fought their way through. Stowaways were forcibly ejected at intervals. "The proportion of actual lunatics was probably small," Mr. Leonard summarizes judicially, "but the general impression was that of a revival in a psychopathic ward." The ship's saloons were decorated with olive branches and stuffed doves. Various enthusiasts made speeches over the rail. Berton Braley, one of the special correspondents, was getting married in a space hastily cleared of baggage. Dr. Pease, the anti-tobacco crusader, was among those present. William Jennings Bryan came aboard, was presented with a squirrel in a small wire cage, and carried it under his arm until the ship sailed. Other squirrels were released. Judge Ben Lindsey exclaimed: "Oh, God, why am I here?" And after the ship had actually started, in a deafening uproar of cheers, whistles, and peace hymns, Urban Ledoux, "Mr. Zero," dived off the dock and swam after it. He was rescued and brought back to shore.

So was Ford, though not until he had reached Norway. His friend and adviser, Dean Marquis, went along expressly to get him back.

The Peace Ship was Ford's most spectacular blunder. But every time he has gone off his own lot he has come to grief in some absurd way. He really might have been President, Mr. Leonard thinks, if he had had the slightest notion of what the President is, what powers and duties attach to the position. Mr. Leonard gives Calvin Coolidge the credit of sidetracking Ford from the route to the White House with the bait of Muscle Shoals; which of course was not in the President's control, though Ford supposed it must be. Perhaps he imagined that the President ran the country in the same sense that he ran his factory. But Ford defeated himself for the Senatorship, when he ran in 1918. He had talked a little too much, in the first flush of enthusiasm at finding himself a national figure. The things he said needed only to be quoted. And he had rashly got himself involved in a libel suit with the Chicago *Tribune*. That was almost as funny as the Peace Ship. His counsel could not keep Ford off the stand. Thus he was forced to reveal that he did not know the difference between Benedict Arnold and Arnold Bennett; that he thought the American Revolution had occurred in 1812; and that he "could read, slowly," but not well enough to risk reading a paragraph aloud in court.

Since then Ford's career has been a slow diminuendo. His Wayside Inn, with its collection of relics of the pre-motor age, Mr. Leonard finds pathetically significant. It is Ford's retreat from reality, from the desolation of the industrial centers. And so his biographer sums up Ford as "a man in some ways friendly, simple, kindly," possessed of "a billion dollars—more or less—which he had come into partly by accident, partly by ruthlessness, partly by a strange sort of non-rational intelligence," an incalculable fortune he was anxious to spend for the benevolent purpose that "all men should have the happiness that comes from living correctly." Hence the anti-cigarette and prohibition propaganda, the inquisition of private spies into the private lives of employees, and even the impracticable projects linked up with Muscle Shoals.

Henry Ford's idea of the Good Life, Mr. Leonard concludes, was formed by his rural or small-town environment, which had preserved the tradition of the frontier. "Ford had grown up under the influence of this point of view, and had absorbed it into his very soul. . . . The leisurely, non-productive pleasures are not in favor where the memory of the frontier still lingers. Nor is anything else which does not contribute to the gathering of things, more things." In prescribing a life devoid of variety, delight, or intellectual stimulus, narrowed down to work and sleep and paced by clockwork, Henry Ford, Mr. Leonard believes, was absurdly and illogically trying to perpetuate the small town. I regret that I cannot follow Mr. Leonard on this point. I can only suppose that he never lived on the frontier. His own picture of Ford's early life, drifting, tinkering, idling, suggests precisely the opposite of the regulated routine of the ideal Ford factory workers. No, a small mind is a small mind anywhere. Barring his narrowly specialized organizing ability, Ford is remarkably like Philip II of Spain, or the last Czar of Russia. The unfortunate Czar had no brains whatever. So it is idle to speculate whether or not he meant well. He really didn't mean anything. But while I disagree with Mr. Leonard on this particular deduction, I heartily recommend his book for its general sanity, excellent writing, and rich entertainment value.

ISABEL PATERSON

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The Gilded Age, and Since

The United States Since 1865. By Louis M. Hacker and Benjamin B. Kendrick. F. S. Crofts and Company. $5.

ANY attempt to tell the story of America in all its controversial phases from 1865 to the present hour is apt to be highly provocative and superficial. It challenges the critical instinct even before the book is opened. "The United States Since 1865" needs no higher compliment than this—it meets the challenge. Here and there one may differ with an interpretation; occasionally one may have reason to question a statement of fact; but every page bears evidence of an intent scrupulously to write with detachment and fairness. The purpose of the authors is to recreate and explain the America of the last sixty-seven years in all its phases. This brings within their scope politics, economics, literature, art, amusement, science, and foreign relations. A chaotic mass, one would think, and yet the story is made to march with quick-step and with the animation of a parade. There are no dull pages, no deadly pauses, and yet there are no pretentious attempts at mere embroidery. And there is no propaganda—something difficult to escape in appearance in dealing with the events of the last ten years. Every page bears evidence of meticulous research and scholarly effort.

Nothing of significance in government, economic change, finance, industry, science, art, literature has been overlooked; and while condensation has been necessary, nothing has been treated superficially. Here we have the tragic story of the Humbling of the Farmers—who were not humbled by inevitable economic forces, but by the deliberate design of men using the instrumentalities of government to create unnatural conditions for their own profit. Here, too, the thus far futile attempt to curb human greed is set forth. The authors might well have called their book "The Hamiltonian Age," for this period began with the close of the Civil War, just as Hamilton had expected. "There will come a crisis in events," he said, complacently contemplating the Jeffersonian triumph. The crisis came; we emerged with a privileged industrialism in the saddle and high finance holding on behind. They have ridden roughshod ever since, as this record shows.

There are numerous chapters on special features, such as The New Industrialism, Money and Trade, Mechanization, The Condition of Agriculture, that are invaluable to the student of present-day problems—problems which apparently have paralyzed the brain of statesmanship. The chapter on the debts furnishes the reader with an illumination for his daily reading. And that on Challenges to Our Industrial Order sets forth the perils of the times fairly. Privileged industrialism and then imperialism and the development of an embryo plutocracy are the outstanding departures of the last sixty-seven years—and here we have the drama of their development and their significance. It is a moving story told in a sprightly style, and with just enough of the humorous and satirical to relieve our feelings.

Especially interesting is the chapter on Life, Letters, and Art, with its estimates of the novelists, poets, artists, and their significance. In these days when it is fashionable in the more precious literary circles to jeer at Dreiser, it is interesting to have a historian's forecast of his historic status. When pretty stylists without depth of thought or feeling or a real grasp on the fundamental meaning of our times are forgotten, Dreiser will live in the books wherein he has interpreted with pity and comprehension what life means to the average man today.

Messrs. Hacker and Kendrick have produced not only the best story of our own times possible from sources now available, but a reference book that is valuable in the interpretation of the daily news.

CLAUDE G. BOWERS

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A Poet of Distinction

Poems. By Geoffrey Scott. Oxford University Press. $1.75.

THIS is a volume of rarely beautiful lyric poetry—poetry which combines perfect economy and craftsmanship with spiritual intensity, constrained and intellectual in its communication. Geoffrey Scott, whose "Architecture of Humanism" has become a minor classic in its field, and who, until his recent death, had made a brilliant beginning as editor of the newly discovered Boswell papers, has left behind him in poetry only this slender volume, but it is enough to prove him a poet of distinction. His theme is

> The tender, the defined
> Stones of the mind
> Carved by the hard
> Cold chisel of dream

and the awareness always of death coming down upon him. With no excess of ornamentation, with entire clarity, and with a restrained passion more powerful because it is held in check, this poet gives us lyric after lyric in which the emotional impulse and the intellectual awareness of its significance are one and the same. Here, in other words, is a modern poet in the best sense. Mr. Scott is

> Lost in the landscape of the mind,
> A country where the lights are low
> And where the ways are hard to find

but he has made this country significant, not desolation only, but a rare landscape, darkly though very delicately indicative of greater explorations than the human spirit has heretofore undertaken. Such a subject and such a vision mean that we have in Mr. Scott's lyrics the best romantic intensity combined with classical perfection of expression. Mr. Scott had a fine lyric gift and an individual outlook on life. His death is a great loss to modern English poetry.

EDA LOU WALTON

Mr. Dennis's Novels

The Red Room. By Geoffrey Dennis. Simon and Schuster. $2.

THE scene of this novel is a small English town, and the time 1890. A young man, assistant in a chemist's shop, who happens through his wife to be the owner of a valuable old house, commits adultery with the wife of his employer. Found out by the husband, he kills himself; the house is then sold by auction. The theme of the book is the heartlessness of the old ladies who try to ferret out the cause of the suicide and of the relatives of the dead man's wife who compete with each other for possession of the house. The central character is the auctioneer, who takes advantage of the episode to exhibit his showmanship and to line his own pockets. As in all Mr. Dennis's books, the characters are lower-middle-class nonconformists, and the author accepts without irony their belief that God is directly interested in the welfare of their souls.

In Mr. Dennis's first two books, "Mary Lee" and "Harvest in Poland," the plot was melodramatic and the characterization unreal; he communicated, on the other hand, a powerful sense of the reality of supernatural things which suggested that if he found a more appropriate medium he could be a writer of importance. "The Red Room" has the same faults as its predecessors and few of their merits; the feeling for the other world has almost disappeared. One is driven to the conclusion that Mr. Dennis was never intended to be a novelist. He is interested in sin, in eternity, in the love of God; he tries to embody his intuitions in stories about English chapel-going shopkeepers and small-town professional men. His own religious feelings are markedly Protestant, as is shown by the undisciplined, half-crazy mysticism of "Harvest in Poland"; but when he reads the same religious feelings into the prosaic and apathetic English petite bourgeoisie his characterization becomes incredible. From beginning to end "The Red Room" seems to be fancy masquerading as observation: conversations and episodes are presented not as Mr. Dennis knows they must have been, but as he fancies they might have been. The chatter of the gossips and the magniloquent speeches of the auctioneer are obvious literary inventions. Most of the events in the book, from the adultery, detection, and suicide at the beginning to the marriage of the auctioneer and the widow at the end, are intrinsically improbable; the reader never believes that they happened, and nothing is said to explain why they happened. The style is diffuse and inexact; Mr. Dennis has an old-fashioned Victorian method of telling a story which will irritate most modern readers, accustomed to a direct rendering of sensation, not to a mere description of it. Moreover, in "The Red Room" he strains after simplicity, and his characters thereby lose that impression of psychological depth which his unwieldy sentences and recondite vocabulary formerly gave to them.

Mr. Dennis has been hailed by several of his elders as one of the best of the younger English novelists. It is obvious that no work of genuine importance will come from a writer who so resolutely refuses to abandon the clichés of the old technique or to restrain his fancifulness in order to reach a closer contact with reality.

HENRY BAMFORD PARKES

An Adventure with Death

Unclay. By T. F. Powys. The Viking Press. $2.50.

THERE must by now be a rather large group of readers who look forward eagerly to the next book by Mr. T. F. Powys. He has a quality which is unique among modern novelists, an insight into the reverse side of the medal of life as well as its face, a kind of super-realism which is unfailingly aware that in the midst of life we are in death. If other novelists, rushing to their own defense, would arise to say that they, too, were not unaware of this momentous fact, one can only answer that no one of them seems so profoundly conscious of its implications as does Mr. Powys.

For his scene he chooses a small village set nominally in rustic England, and actually existing only in the mind of its creator. For his people he chooses the simple countrymen whom also he creates. No man or woman alive is so cruel as they can be, or so good, or so simple, or so entirely without surprise. If Death comes among them, calling himself Mr. Death, then Mr. Death he is, and himself and his scythe, which hourly he whets, cause no consternation or amazement among the villagers. Susie, who is young and fair, finds herself in love with him instead of with her farmer sweetheart, and watches him dig the grave they are to lie in together until eternity. But Death, who is living in the village because he has temporarily mislaid the order given him by his employer, is prevented from carrying out this pretty romance, which would incidentally have deprived him of both divine favor and his own character, by finding the lost parchment. On it Susie's name is written, but not his own. Susie must die, and Death must go on to the execution of fresh commands. Around Death and Susie the other characters of the tale live their lives: twelve-year-old Winnie Huddy, betaking herself to live with Mr. Solly, who "regarded women as a kind of wurzel," against the day, five years hence, when she will be duly wed to him; Daisy, her sister, turned from whoring by the power of the poor clergyman, Mr. Hayhoe, using as bible

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"Northanger Abbey" and "Pride and Prejudice"; Mr. Dawe and Mr. Mere, two old men who buy and sell Susie, but by whom and to whom she never is bought or sold; Miss Bridle, who fancied herself a camel, and who was the more patient, drudging, and willing for it. A strange crew, with a strange mixture of earthly and unearthly qualities, moving through the milieu of the village and the compelling mass of Madder Hill above it with a portentous calm. Skirting death, tolerating it, courting it; accepting it as they accept life and love and madness and deprivation, because it and these are in their midst and must be reckoned with.

One tends rather to fall into Mr. Powys's own tone while writing of him. Nor do I see any reason why he should change his tone, why he should discard his symbolism, as has been suggested, and write plainly of men and things. There are plenty of persons who can write plainly. There are none with whom I am acquainted who can combine realism and what is beyond realism in quite this mysterious and powerful way. And in truth, when Mr. Powys tries to explain his meanings he is likely to fall into a rather sentimental supernaturalism. In "Unclay," however, this pitfall seldom yawns for him. His tone in it is fateful and fresh and strange; he is master of his locality as he is of his style. In short, he is a very fine novelist, and "Unclay" is one of his better novels.

DOROTHY VAN DOREN

Books in Brief

Ben Jonson. Volume IV. Edited by C. H. Herford and Percy Simpson. Oxford University Press. $7.

The fourth volume of the new edition of the Works of Ben Jonson brings us to "Cynthia's Revels," "Poetaster," "Sejanus," and "Eastward Ho." The great comedies are still to come. At this stage we have to drive heavily through the conscientious exhibition and satire of outmoded and preposterous futilities before we reach, at the close of "Poetaster," the self-portrait of the serene high poet who, "safe from the wolf's black jaw and the dull ass's hoof," is contemplating a tragic theme. The fruit of his contemplation is "Sejanus"; and when we have read that play we are on the threshold of Jonson's great period. Meanwhile we have also the satiric comedy in which he collaborated with Chapman and Marston, "Eastward Ho." The design of this edition has relegated the commentary (for which these overcharged plays afford ample opportunity) to the concluding volumes. We have here only the texts and textual notes with succinct introductions that deal solely with the problem of the text. Professor C. H. Herford, one of the editors, has died since the publication of this series began; fortunately his share of the task was completed with the two preliminary volumes of biography and general criticism. Dr. Percy Simpson is alone responsible for texts and commentary. To this volume he adds a foreword in memory of his distinguished and learned collaborator. This "In Memoriam" is a model of what such tributes should be, succinct and restrained yet evincing deep feeling and a profound admiration for Herford not only as a scholar but as a personality.

Great Spanish Short Stories. Translated by Warre B. Wells. With Biographical Notes by J. C. Gorkin and an Introduction by Henri Barbusse. Houghton Mifflin Company. $3.

The Introduction by Barbusse would lead us to believe that these tales representing the work of the leading Spanish writers of the day deal, if not with revolution itself, then with the spirit of revolt. The collection itself makes it clear, however, that in spite of the fact that most of the writers have

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actively participated in the revolt—some of them, indeed, have been in exile or in jail—their creative efforts may be said to be only vaguely connected with revolutionary experience. They are—if we are to judge them by these stories—artists first, revolutionaries afterward. On the other hand, the biographical notes supplied by Mr. Gorkin indicate that they have been in the very forefront of the struggle of liberation. The oldest, and in point of indefatigability the youngest of them, Miguel de Unamuno, contributes an allegory called Solitude; there is genuine pathos in this story of a woman ignored by her father, maltreated by her brother, and abandoned by her betrothed. There is some fine satire in Ramón del Valle Inclán's The Golden Rose, which is a scene from the court life of Isabel II, "the perfect Queen," grandmother of the future Alfonso XIII; it is by far the most "revolutionary" story in the book. The Abyss, by Pio Baroja, best known to us through his novels, is a terrible indictment of superstition and, like The Golden Rose, a perfect little story. Ibáñez, whom the English-reading public knows by his poorest novels, is represented by a story of a drunken flutist which is in its way a gem. The Assistant Professor, by Ramón Pérez de Ayala, now Spanish Ambassador to London, has charm. These, together with Saint Alexis, are the best of the fifteen stories which make up the distinguished collection.

Manhattan Side-Show. By Konrad Bercovici. The Century Company. $4.

Bercovici tells more tales of New York people and restaurants and streets in this successor to "Around the World in New York," illustrated with a profusion of pen-and-ink sketches by Norman Borchardt. He intersperses pathetic little made-up stories with accounts of dinners and conversations with celebrities, and mingles tales of real people under their own or fictitious names with obscure dramas of mean streets. There is a good chapter on "Sheriff" Bob Chanler. There are also chapters on Dreiser, Harlem, and the speakeasies; on Charles Edison, "the Son of a Great Man," and Saul Elman, "the Father of a Genius"; on famous radicals and labor leaders, theatrical managers and actresses, restaurants and amusement places. The book offers good entertainment for an evening. And since there is no continuity one may have the pleasure of skipping about in it, looking at the pictures, and skimming off the cream —even though the milk underneath runs a bit thin.

Adventurous Americans. Edited by Devere Allen. Farrar and Rinehart. $3.

The title of this book suggests Daniel Boone, Zebulon M. Pike, or Kit Carson. So it is disconcerting to find biographies of John Dewey, Carrie Chapman Catt, John Haynes Holmes, Sidney Hillman, Norman Thomas, Sherwood Eddy, Judah L. Magnes, and a score of their contemporaries. Of course a moment's reflection justifies the characterization of the champions of unpopular beliefs and causes as the genuinely adventurous Americans of today. Our physical frontier has been tamed and colonized; the supreme adventure of this century is the assault upon the intrenched greed, ignorance, and bigotry which are obstructing the entrance of humanity into a new world of cooperation. The only exception to be taken, therefore, to the choice of persons for "Adventurous Americans" is that they represent too extensively the respectable right wing of reform and too little the persecuted left of revolution. It is true that the volume contains sketches of such militant rebels as Margaret Sanger and Scott Nearing, but place is not given to a single present member of the Communist Party or the Industrial Workers of the World. Ex-Justice Oliver Wendell Holmes, Bishop Francis J. McConnell, and Grace Abbott are included; William Z. Foster, Elizabeth Gurley Flynn, and Emma Goldman are ignored. But it would be unfair to press this point

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too far. The biographies originated as a series for the *World Tomorrow*, and they are representative of a fairly cohesive and decidedly important group in American life. The title chosen for book publication was an afterthought. The biographies are contributed each by a separate writer, to whom freedom of expression is given by anonymity. But in every instance the writer is frankly an admirer of his subject, and although the sketches are informative, readable, and in some cases inspiring, they are in no strict sense critical.

The Dream Life of Balso Snell. By Nathanael West. New York: Moss and Kamin. $3.

The *mise en scène* of this fantasy is the entrails of the Trojan horse, and of course no scatological detail is missed. The intention is probably to be fantastically humorous, perhaps profoundly humorous. The intention is not realized.

August. By Knut Hamsun. Translated from the Norwegian by Eugene Gay-Tifft. Coward-McCann. $3.

August was a character in an earlier Hamsun novel, "Vagabonds." After twenty years of roaming he returns in middle age to the Norwegian fishing village of Polden. He has been in America and brings with him the ferment of industrialism. Without motive, simply because he believes in "progress," he sets about to transform Polden into a modern community, to give it new houses, a post office, a bank, a factory. At first his plans succeed, but before he is through he has ruined and starved a good many simple peasants. Of his symbolical significance the best analysis is made by one of the characters:

> If you take him as a tool of the modern age, then he had some grounds to be like he was: he was a missionary. Personally, he was a hustler and a fiend for work. He could drop one thing and take up another right then and there, and he was able, too, in his way—he was the most irresponsible fellow in the world but there was no end to his good-will, either. When he was sick last winter, he lay in bed worrying because he had never learned to walk the tight-rope. . . . He was a wild one . . . he brought us many things and . . . he gave everything away bravely and without scruple. He made everything alluring and lots of fun; he was a joker and a terrible liar, and that was the modern age, the age of mechanics, the Americanism that was in him.

More than once Hamsun seems to be portraying August in order to speak to the rest of Norway his own patriarchal mind on the subject of progress; but always August is a flesh-and-blood character. Hamsun's genial mastery makes him entertaining and individual throughout. The story is told for the most part in a simulation of peasant dialect, simple, wise, and humorous.

Architecture

What the Man About Town Will Build

A HOUSE that is a sort of box or aggregation of boxes—flat top, flat sides with plenty of glass in them, color generally white, and the whole thing preferably raised on stilts—this, loosely described, is what you were given to see at the Museum of Modern Art. Under the title "The International Style" it will travel thence through the leading museums of the country, on a tour of three years. Whether "style" or not, what the show centers on is certainly the most advanced Continental technique. And, considering events, we can be

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quite sure that houses more or less like these are what the man about town will build.

That their character is daring or advanced is not against them but on the contrary quite in their favor. The adventure is attractively new because really not unsafe. The "style" comes attested, it has a history, and the book about it by Henry-Russell Hitchcock and Philip Johnson, and others, issued in conjunction with the show, is in itself a valuable architectural record.* Elegant, recherché, the new forms appeal to the aristocrat of modern taste.

What gives the last decade such a show of strength is that during its course four paths have met. From study of factories, bridges, and ships came men who for the first time carried into architecture the idea of radical science. For them the layout of a town is an exercise in practical hygiene; physics and chemistry they ransack for possible devices to decrease clumsy bulk and weight; and they will permit no interference with efficiency or speed. Such sciences let strictly alone, so they believe, will lead of themselves to the finest possible building. They want no art. They are simple.

The second group of men came by devious routes out of Paris—Montparnasse. Without the painter van Doesburg no architect Oud; and without Ozenfant no architect Le Corbusier, in whose own person in turn is the painter Jeanneret. Cubism. Purism. Neo-plasticism. Their deep respect for "function"—for the science of the first group—they subject to psychological arrangement, to art. And the abstract art of Paris was extremely useful to them. It dealt in simplification.

Now comes from the rolling hill lands of Wisconsin the figure of a single man—Frank Lloyd Wright. He, too, an engineer; he, too, interested in abstraction; but his ideal, country-fashion, the tree—"organic" or "natural" simplicity.

All are in the decade and in the show, not forgetting, too, the talented opportunist, such as Raymond Hood, running in at the last minute by the side door. Will they all stay together? Are the paths to constitute a highway?

Appearances say yes. Never have the various products looked so similar. To those who love uniformity, order, discipline, the result is a triumph, Even the "rebel" Wright, so some of the sponsors exultantly declare, begins more nearly to "fit." Fit what? The new "international style." A classical one, with a "definite aesthetic," and, we may add, a still more definite limited technique. Athens, Rome, Paris. But Wright, the individual, remains a stumbling-block. Certain others among the internationalists say he never was and never will be orthodox. A romantic—the last, so it is hoped.

I, too, believe, and with still more emphasis, that the paths will diverge. Nothing is established yet, except possibly the common victory over copying the periods and adapting ancient methods. We are at the beginning, not the end, of modern imagination. Technology is far more resourceful than this technique, and the Paris-painting base is not broad enough for more than a school and a couple of decades. Study the models more closely—Wright's House for the Mesa, Miës's Tugendhat House, and the Savoye House of Le Corbusier—and you will see implicit differences leading to great new variety and change. You will even see diametric oppositions of attitude and character. All modern.

But such considerations mean nothing, or next to it, for the man about town. Did I once write about the up-to-date woman, telling what it was she thought "awfully good for America"? Well, Paris gives pedigree for the man also, and the new discipline gives the game its necessary rules. See him take the high sign. Watch his architect strain in the discipline. See him throw overboard—ah, no, you can't. The photographs are too good for you to see that. His houses, too, appear to

* "Modern Architects." Edited by Alfred H. Barr. W. W. Norton and Company. $3.

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ıave the proper cut: flat top, flat sides with plenty of glass, olor generally white, and the whole thing preferably raised ın stilts.

The housing exhibit was separately handled, and so, unortunately, constitutes a separate subject. It is superb. Comıarative photographs and forthright analytic tables show why Europe has housing and we next to none. Indeed, the method ıf display throughout the exhibition is magnificent—again openng up a subject! Among American architects besides Wright, hose given emphasis are Neutra, and Howe and Lescaze. The ıousing project of the latter for Christie and Forsythe streets ıas challenging innovations, but certain aspects are highly deıatable. Thompson and Churchill, represented by a small office ıuilding at Fifty-seventh Street, deserve a note, having over a ɔeriod of years done more consistently competent modern work, hough on a modest scale, than most of the big noises.

DOUGLAS HASKELL

Drama

Concerning Obstetrics

THE more conservative critics of contemporary literature sometimes object that it is unnecessarily "obstetrical." Yet no one, so far as I was able to observe, seemed parıicularly shocked by "Life Begins," even though that play does ɔurn the stage of the Selwyn Theater into the maternity ward ɔf a hospital, and even though it is concerned exclusively with ɔhe various aspects, both sentimental and medical, of the more modern methods for the mass production of babies. Two nurses ɔonstitute the only female members of the cast who are not, remotely or immediately, "expecting." All possible attitudes to ɔhe forthcoming event are discussed at some length. And when ɔne sees a whole stage full of pregnant women one is comɔelled to realize that times have changed since the days when ɛven a father was expected to learn only by accident—or by ɔhe delicate innuendo of unwonted needlework—the interesting ɔondition of his wife. I would, however, be the last to suggest ɔhat the morality of the play leaves anything to be desired. Most comedies end when the heroine is brought to bed for less ɔbviously laudable purposes, and only three of the many prosɔpective infants referred to are putatively illegitimate—proporɔionately fewer than would be found to be similarly unfortunate ɛ statistics were compiled concerning the births which have ɔaken place in the American drama during the past decade.

On the program the author of this odd but entertaining ɔlay is described as "ex-nurse, ex-newspaperwoman, and mother." Nor is it difficult to see how each of these varied disciplines has contributed to the work in question, though I must confess that it is the newspaperwoman who seems to have had the greatest influence. Thus I failed to observe that much was accomplished so far as the avowed purpose of touching the audience with a sense of the divine mystery of motherhood is concerned; but I did find an amusing comedy-drama, half sentimental, half satiric, which is written with some of the simple vividness and hard-boiled humor of a feature story. Such plot as there is, is relatively unimportant, and the interest centers in the topical details of hospital life. Various women come and go, and each is typical of some attitude toward the experience which has brought them all—Irish broodmare, flapper, and night-club hostess alike—to the same standard nightgown and the same little white bed. Some go exultant and some go resentful. Some return triumphant and some return on a stretcher. But though they are diverse before they go into the delivery room and diverse when they come out, there is the one incident which reduces them for the moment to ex-

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Whistling in the Dark—Ethel Barrymore—47 St. W. of B'way.

IN THE NATION NEXT WEEK

Presidential Possibilities VIII

Franklin D. Roosevelt:

Perched on the Band Wagon

by Henry F. Pringle

"He is all things to many sections of the nation. In the East he is wet and not radical. In the West he is Progressive. In the South he is not very wet, after all, and is—thank God—a Protestant . . . He is a gentleman."

actly the same status, and it is with the time during which they converge toward it that the playwright is concerned. She regards them all with an eye half reverent, half amused, but it is as a comedy of humors that her play can best be regarded. Most of the characters are frankly types. They lack any great individuality and any great originality. But they do constitute an amusing gallery of women drawn with broad though effective strokes.

I could not, however, keep myself from wondering just what a future age would make of such a play, should it ever happen to be unearthed by a curious student of twentieth-century ideology. Could any other age, I asked myself, possibly know what to make of this particular blend of traditional sentiment and rather self-conscious objectivity which we take more or less as a matter of course? And I concluded that my future student would have the key if he would only remember two things about the vocabulary of the twenties and thirties: first, that it was then that love ceased to be either a sin or a sacrament and became "sex expression"; second, that though married women of the time seldom spoke of wanting children, yet it was quite common for them to remark that they thought they "owed it to themselves to have the experience of motherhood."

Joseph Wood Krutch

Films

Cagney Again

JAMES CAGNEY'S latest picture, "The Crowd Roars" (Winter Garden Theater), is superficially undistinguished. Its story is simple and concerns very ordinary people. Joe Greer, who has become a famous racing driver, returns to his home town to find that the "kid brother" has the same inexplicable passion as himself. Since he cannot persuade Eddie that the life of a racer is not glorious, he takes him back to the city to make a good driver of him. From there on the rather feeble plot describes Joe's attempt to keep the boy away from "women and booze." He "gives the air" to the sweetheart with whom he has been living and who loves him most respectably; his fondness for liquor is not so easily got rid of, and accounts for most of the melodramatic sequences of races, wrecks, and reconciliations which need not be reviewed. The picture is weakened by a mistake in casting and inferior dialogue. Ann Dvorak, who plays Joe's sweetheart, neither looks nor acts the part. In both gesture and speech she is amateurish and flamboyant when she should be knowing and restrained. Joan Blondell, who is much nearer the required type, plays instead, and very well, the minor part of Eddie's deliberate seducer—and subsequent loving wife. The dialogue is not by any means as telling as Glasmon and Bright are in the habit of providing, though it must be said that they are dealing here with more difficult situations than usual. Finally, to one who has always considered automobile racing one of the minor insanities, the mad whirl around the track while the crowd roars—for blood as Joe's girl says—is more depressing than exhilarating.

But automobile racing is an indigenous, popular American sport and the ambition to drive a race at Indianapolis is fairly common among small boys—it could hardly be otherwise in the land of Henry Ford. That being so, it is fitting material for the movies and particularly for James Cagney, who portrays so well the hard but sentimental American youth who has strict and formulated definitions of honor and virtue for which he is willing and anxious to fight, especially where a younger brother or sister is concerned, and whose cocksureness is an amusing and pretty effective disguise for the adolescent inferiority beneath.

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The interest of "The Crowd Roars"—and it is considerable—lies in Cagney's characterization and in the background against which the story is played. Throughout there is excellent and imaginative camera work. For instance, the opening episode of a train arriving by night in Joe's home town is profoundly convincing: the bags packed and waiting in the Pullman seats, the flashes of light from the locomotive revealing at intervals a countryside at once familiar and strange, the platform reception of the boy who has made good, the proud unloading of the racer, and the homecoming which takes place in the family garage rather than the house; all are informed with that poignant eagerness known as homesickness which is a typical and universal experience in this country of magnificent distances and restless humanity. Again, the relationship of the brothers, though crudely handled, is truly conceived. In "The Crowd Roars," Cagney and his collaborators succeed once more in capturing irony and pathos as well as humor that are essentially American. Human beings are pathetic in so far as they are helpless; the pathos is intensified when they proceed as if they were in control of their lives—as if a blind man did not know that he was blind. In America, where fast and intricate tools have created an unparalleled illusion of power, the disparity between the possibility of control and the capacity of the individual is especially wide, the irony correspondingly deep. It is this irony that Cagney exploits, perhaps without conscious intent, in all of his pictures; and they are invariably interesting even when, like the present one, they do not qualify as finished entertainment.

For finished entertainment there is "One Hour with You" (Rialto Theater), directed by Ernst Lubitsch and charmingly played by Maurice Chevalier. Chevalier's peculiarly French luster, which has been dimmed by too many American "personal appearances," is completely restored in this picture. His volatile and ingratiating acting, along with two other excellent performances by Roland Young and Charles Ruggles, offsets the rather affected playing of Jeanette MacDonald and Genevieve Tobin; it almost dispels the artificial effects of operetta numbers which require scientific breathing and can therefore never be casual.

MARGARET MARSHALL

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Bragdon, Claude. The Frozen Fountain. Knopf. $3.75.
Frankl, Paul T. Machine-made Leisure. Harper. $3.50.
Hitchcock, Henry-Russell and Johnson, Philip. The International Style: Architecture Since 1922. Norton. $5.
Read, Herbert. The Anatomy of Art. Dodd, Mead. $3.
Simonson, Lee. The Stage Is Set. Harcourt, Brace. $5.
Wölfflin, Heinrich. Principles of Art History. Holt. $5.

BIOGRAPHY, MEMOIRS, LETTERS

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Ayres, Clarence. Huxley. Norton. $3.
Benson, E. F. Charlotte Brontë. Longmans, Green. $4.
Bent, Silas. Justice Oliver Wendell Holmes. Vanguard. $4.50.
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